

**Up-to-date information as of May 29th, 2020\*\*\***

# COVID-19 NEWSLETTER

MNBC MINISTRY OF HEALTH - ISSUE 11



## Issue 11: Highlights

BC CDC COVID-19 survey reminder: May 31st deadline. To mask or not to mask? BC's Restart Plan. Provincial state of emergency extended. Alcohol and the immune system.

**"We all want healthy, vibrant, safe communities. By working together and supporting each other in kindness and compassion, we will make this happen."**

Dr. Bonnie Henry

If you know of someone in need, or are isolated yourself and need assistance, email [covid19@mnbc.ca](mailto:covid19@mnbc.ca)

MNBC's Health Team will help connect you to available Community supports.

MNBC will be updating our webpage as new information becomes available.

Follow our COVID-19 page at [www.mnbc.ca](http://www.mnbc.ca)

Please also see the last page, with links to previous issues of our COVID-19 newsletter for more information on hand washing, physical distancing (6 feet or 2m apart).

# BC CDC COVID-19 SURVEY REMINDER: ENDS MAY 31ST



**The deadline to complete the BC CDC's "*BC COVID-19 SPEAK: Your story, our future*" survey is Sunday, May 31st.**

This survey is the first of several activities that will strengthen our pandemic response and our understanding of the impacts of COVID-19 to date.

The survey is open to all British Columbians 18 years of age and older, and takes 10-15 minutes. It can be done online on any tablet, computer or mobile device.

For information, or to take the survey, visit: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/covid-19-survey>

# TO MASK OR NOT TO MASK? MASK FAQs

There still appears to be an ongoing confusion around which mask to wear, when to wear a mask, and what protection the masks offers.

## **Which mask should I be wearing?**

- The N-95 mask and the surgical masks (blue and yellow paper masks) are only to be used by medical personnel who have direct patient contact.
- For everyone else, we are encouraged to use homemade or non-medical masks.

## **Non-medical face masks or face coverings should:**

- allow for easy breathing
- fit securely to the head with ties or ear loops
- maintain their shape after washing and drying
- be changed as soon as possible if damp or dirty
- be comfortable and not require frequent adjustment
- be made of at least 2 layers of tightly woven material fabric (such as cotton or linen)
- be large enough to completely and comfortably cover the nose and mouth without gaping

Some masks also include a pocket to accommodate a paper towel or disposable coffee filter, for increased benefit.

There are many examples of how to make homemade masks on YouTube.



# TO MASK OR NOT TO MASK? MASK FAQs

## When should I be wearing a mask?

- The homemade masks should be worn when going out in public and you are unable to maintain the social distancing of 2 m (6 feet) away from other people. Examples are public transit, shopping and in stores.
- You should always wash or sanitize your hands before and after putting on, or taking off a mask. Wash your mask after each use in regular laundry detergent or dish soap.

## What protection does the homemade mask provide?

- At this period in time it is believed that the homemade mask does help in preventing the spread of the virus and in protecting others.

## In conclusion:

When you're unable to maintain that safe distance of 2 m it is recommended you wear the homemade mask to protect others around you. If we all wear homemade masks, then the chance of spreading the COVID-19 is greatly reduced.

The proven methods to prevent the spread of the disease are: social distancing, proper handwashing techniques, avoiding touching your face, mouth, eyes and nose with your hands, using hand sanitizer if you're not able to wash your hands and staying home when you're feeling unwell.

# BC'S RESTART PLAN & PROVINCIAL STATE OF EMERGENCY



## BC'S RESTART PLAN

As of May 19th, Phase Two of BC's Restart Plan has begun. BC's Restart Plan is the first in a series of steps that we will take together to protect people and ensure that our province can come back from COVID-19 stronger than before.

To learn more about the Restart Plan, including an overview, protective measures that have been taken, next steps to make life a little easier, and more, visit:

<https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/safety/emergency-preparedness-response-recovery/covid-19-provincial-support/bc-restart-plan>

## Provincial State of Emergency - Extended

The provincial state of emergency is being extended an additional two weeks to support continued co-ordination of B.C.'s COVID-19 response.

"We are now in the longest state of emergency in our province's history, and British Columbians everywhere have shown we have what it takes to persevere through these challenging times," said Premier John Horgan. "As we slowly turn the dial on our social and economic activity, we must work together to do so in a way that keeps our communities and loved ones safe in the weeks and months to come."

# ALCOHOL and the IMMUNE SYSTEM:

## 4 Things You Should Know



Drinking alcohol can affect the immune system and your health, which may worsen symptoms of COVID-19.

### WHAT YOU SHOULD KNOW



1. Alcohol consumption contributes to a wide range of health problems and can weaken the body's immune system.



3. Chronic high-risk alcohol use can weaken lung immune responses and increases the risk of developing respiratory illnesses, such as pneumonia and acute respiratory distress syndrome.



2. High-risk alcohol use\* reduces the body's ability to fight off illnesses.



4. Alcohol use does not stimulate the immune system or increase resistance to illness.

### WHAT YOU CAN DO

- Avoid or reduce alcohol consumption. If you are pregnant, breastfeeding or planning to become pregnant, the safest choice is to not drink alcohol and follow **public health advice for pregnancy, childbirth and caring for newborns**.
- Follow **Canada's Low-Risk Alcohol Drinking Guidelines**. These guidelines contain suggestions for lowering risks associated with the use of alcohol.
- Use **Knowing Your Limits with Alcohol: A Practical Guide to Assessing Your Drinking** to reflect on your relationship with alcohol.
- If you are seeking support for substance use, visit <https://www.ccsa.ca/addictions-treatment-helplines-canada> and **Wellness Together Canada**.

For more information on alcohol and the immune system,  
see **COVID-19, Alcohol and Cannabis Use**.

\* High-risk alcohol use defined as drinking more than 3 drinks for women or 4 drinks for men on any single occasion, and more than 10 drinks per week for women and 15 drinks per week for men.



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For more information visit

[www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca)

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# THANK YOU

To all our healthcare workers, first responders, frontline staff, and essential service workers - we thank you from the bottom of our hearts.

We are so deeply grateful for all that you do. Though we are apart for now, we stand with you always.



# PAST NEWSLETTERS HIGHLIGHTS

**Please note that these issues are up-to-date as of the dates they were originally published, and as such, some information may no longer be valid.**

ISSUE TEN. Government of Canada recommendation for wearing non-medical masks in public. Appropriate non-medical mask usage. BC CDC COVID-19 Survey. B.C. COVID-19 Temporary Pandemic Pay for health, social services and corrections employees delivering in-person, front-line care. Celebrating 2020 Métis graduates. Read Issue #10 [here](#).

ISSUE NINE. Federal government support for seniors. Canada Child Benefit (CCB) payment increase. Part-time, voluntary return to school June 1. Canada Emergency Student Benefit (CESB). BC provincial parks reopening. COVID-19 journal and activity book for kids. COVID-19: harm reduction support. Read Issue #9 [here](#).

ISSUE EIGHT. Hearts in the Window weekly contest. BC's Restart Plan. Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy extended. Celebrating Mother's Day this year. Métis wellness youth event. COVID-19 support resources. BC provincial overdose alert. Read Issue #8 [here](#).

ISSUE SEVEN. Glove distribution update. Hearts in the Window weekly contest. Staying entertained and active at home (Tah'lum Indigenous Artist Collective Colouring Book, FitNation, Métis Families Activities Guide). Zoom hangouts for Indigenous Youth. London Drugs providing shelf space for small businesses. Read Issue #7 [here](#).

ISSUE SIX. Survey deadline - April 30th, 2020. Support for Indigenous businesses. Relief for Métis entrepreneurs in BC during COVID-19. Hearts in the Window weekly contest. Foundry virtual services for youth (ages 12-24). Read Issue #6 [here](#).

ISSUE FIVE. Education and rent support from MNBC. ICBC. BC Hydro. Homemade Masks. Service Canada – ready to help. Self-isolation when you live with other family members. Read Issue #5 [here](#).

ISSUE FOUR. Increased support for mental health services. Safe Seniors, Strong Communities program. Temporary emergency child care for essential workers. BC Parks closure. Read Issue #4 [here](#).

ISSUE THREE. Applying for the Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB). Provincial Emergency Fund for Post-Secondary Students. Indigenous Emergency Assistance Fund for Post-Secondary Students. BC COVID-19 Mental Health Support. Read Issue #3 [here](#).