

MÉTIS NATION BRITISH COLUMBIA HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 27 | UP-TO-DATE INFORMATION AS OF SEPTEMBER 18TH, 2020



"COVID-19 requires compromise and give and take. Today, our focus is to have as much as possible open and functioning in our communities – our essential services, workplaces and schools – while limiting our exposure to higher-risk activities and locations.

This give and take is a sacrifice for all of us, but is one that will keep us safe in the weeks and months ahead."

Dr. Bonnie Henry

If you or someone you know is isolated or in need of assistance, please email health@mnbc.ca. MNBC's Ministry of 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

Please also see the last page, with links to previous issues of our COVID-19 newsletter for more information on hand washing, physical distancing, and more.

INSIDE ISSUE 27

NEW COVID-19 TEST
AVAILABLE FOR K-12
STUDENTS

BC CENTRE FOR DISEASE
CONTROL WEBSITE NOW
POSTING ALL SCHOOL-
RELATED COVID-19 CASES

CBC ARTICLE: ARE MY
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MY RECORDS, MY CHOICE
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WEEK 2020: CALL FOR
PARTICIPANTS



NEW COVID-19 TEST AVAILABLE FOR K-12 STUDENTS

Containing the spread of the virus in our communities is core to our COVID-19 response and that is why getting tested as soon as you have symptoms is so important.

Today, a new made-in-B.C. sample collection program has been launched for all K-12 students across the province. One of the first of its kind worldwide.

For school-aged children four to 19, a mouth-rinse gargle is now available at COVID-19 collection centres around the province. Unlike the nasopharyngeal swab method, this new saline method doesn't require a health-care professional to collect the sample. Taking the step to get tested is how you protect your friends and loved ones, and for K-12 students there is now an easier alternative.

FROM THE THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 17TH JOINT STATEMENT ON BC'S COVID-19 RESPONSE. READ THE FULL RELEASE [HERE](#)

SEPTEMBER 17TH,
2020 MARKED A
RECORD HIGH NUMBER
OF NEW CONFIRMED
COVID-19 CASES, WITH
165 NEW CASES
CONFIRMED

BC CENTRE FOR DISEASE CONTROL WEBSITE NOW POSTING ALL SCHOOL-RELATED COVID-19 CASES

From the Government of British Columbia (read the full statement [here](#)):

Beginning [September 16th, 2020], the BCCDC website will also link to regional health authorities' school notification pages, providing the date and type of notification (outbreak, cluster or exposure) for impacted schools. Fraser Health's school notification page is available now and the other regional health authorities will have theirs ready soon.

[Exposure] alerts are posted on the BC Centre for Disease Control's (BCCDC) website, as well as on health authorities' websites, providing details on where the potential exposure occurred and what actions to take – whether you need to self-isolate or monitor for symptoms.

You can access the BC CDC Public Exposures page [here](#):

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/public-exposures>





CBC ARTICLE: ARE MY SYMPTOMS RELATED TO COVID-19, OR THE WILDFIRE SMOKE?

From CBC News (read the full article [here](#)):

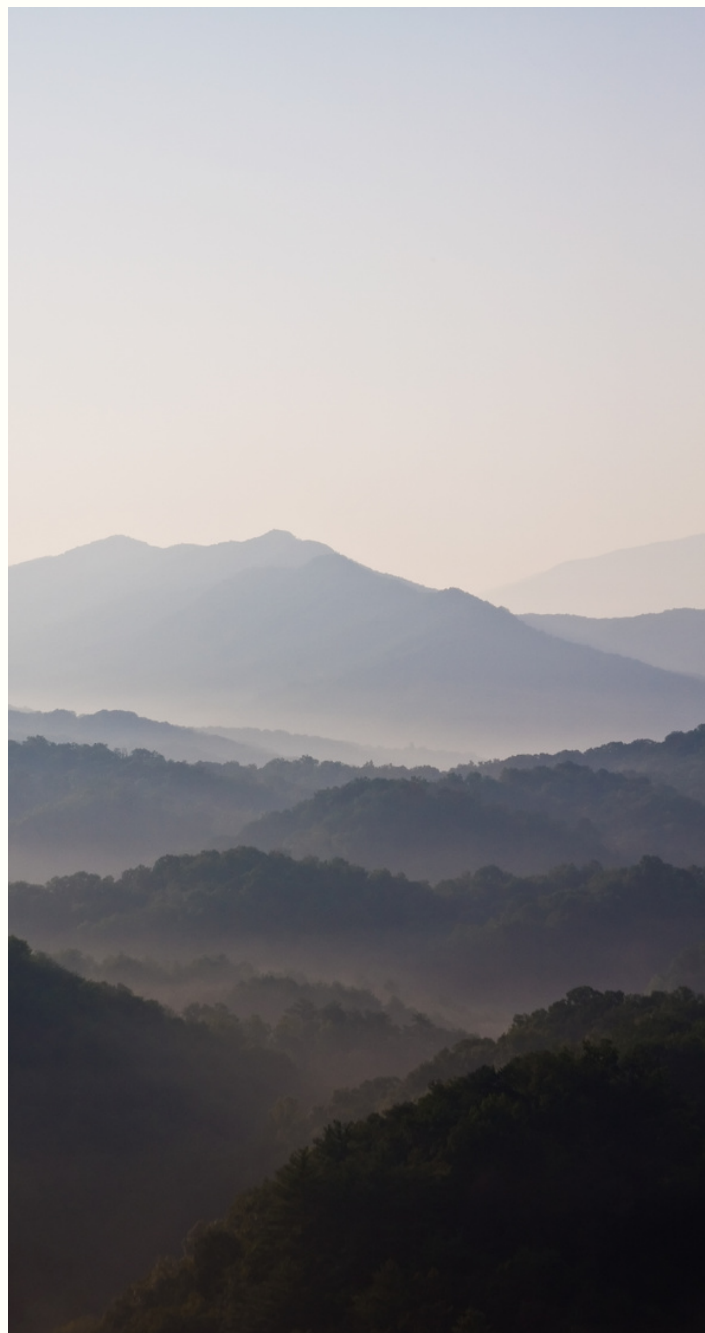
Much of southern B.C. has been shrouded in haze for days, the air feeling thick and chalky, the light giving off an ominous orange hue.

Smoke from the wildfires raging in Washington state and Oregon has drifted north, prompting Environment Canada to issue a special air quality statement for all but the northern third of the province. A live air tracker lists Vancouver's air quality as among the worst in the world, along with Portland and Seattle. For many B.C. residents the haze is anxiety-inducing at an already anxious time, and reminiscent of the province's worst wildfire season, when much of the province was cloaked in smoke. But the low air quality can also have very real physical health effects, at a time when respiratory health is already top of mind.

So if you're feeling under the weather — how can you tell whether your symptoms are related to COVID-19, or a side effect of poor air quality?

Sarah Henderson, a senior environmental health scientist at the B.C. Centre for Disease Control, said that distinguishing between the two can be "tough," as many symptoms of COVID-19 and signs of irritation from smoke can be similar.

But there are some tell-tale signs to keep in mind.





CBC ARTICLE: ARE MY SYMPTOMS RELATED TO COVID-19, OR THE WILDFIRE SMOKE? (CONTINUED)

"There are some symptoms of COVID that we really wouldn't expect to be associated with smoke ... things like a fever, body aches, chills — those types of symptoms are unlikely to be caused by the smoke. However, there are symptoms that are very similar between the two and that's a dry cough, sore throat, runny nose, and a headache," she said.

"If you're having difficulty breathing that's a medical emergency — whether it's COVID or smoke-related — and you should call 911."

Henderson said if you've experienced poor air quality before, it can be useful to compare your symptoms to ones you may have had previously.

"We've had these big smoke exposures in British Columbia before, so were you sensitive to the smoke at that time? If you were, maybe that's what's happening again," she said.

But if you're unsure, Henderson advised using the [B.C. COVID-19 self-assessment tool](#), or calling 811 for advice on how to proceed.

"If you may have COVID you definitely need to be tested," she said.

WILL MY MASK PROTECT ME FROM THE SMOKE?

From CBC News (read the full article [here](#)):

The short answer is — yes, your mask will protect you from the smoke, to a certain degree, if it is fitted properly.

"One of the silver linings from my perspective about this whole terrible pandemic is we've learned quite a lot about masks and materials very quickly," said Henderson.

"The most important thing is how well the mask fits your face, because if you wanted to filter the smoke, the smoke can't go around the mask — it has to go through the mask — so there can't be any gaps around your face."

Henderson said the ideal cloth mask to protect against smoke is one with tightly-woven cotton and a layer of silk, but any mask with a double layer will provide some protection.

Avoiding strenuous physical activity and having a portable air cleaner are also advised to reduce your risk, especially for people with pre-existing conditions like asthma, heart disease, or diabetes. Henderson said the elderly, pregnant women, and children are the most at risk, and little is known about the effects of smoke on infant lungs, which are very delicate.

"The first thing is to know your susceptibility. If you have a condition, be aware. If you use respiratory medications, carry them with you at all times. Listen to your body, if your body is telling you that you're having difficulty with the smoke, take it easy and find ways to reduce your smoke exposure."



My Records, My Choice

If you made an IAP or ADR claim for compensation for residential school abuse, there are records of your claim. You now have the opportunity to choose what happens to those records after your claim is finished.

The choice is yours

- Your records from the Independent Assessment Process (IAP) or the Alternative Dispute Resolution process (ADR) are confidential.
- To keep them confidential, you don't need to do anything.
- If you do nothing, your records will be automatically destroyed on September 19, 2027.
- Until September 19, 2027 you can get a copy of your records for yourself or to share with anyone you choose.
- If you choose, you can preserve your records for history, education, and research at the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR).

Which records are being kept?

- Your application form
- The voice recording of your testimony
- The printed record (transcript) of your testimony
- The decision on your claim

Can I get a copy of my own records?

Yes. To get a copy of your application form, the transcript of your testimony, and your decision, call IAP Information toll free at **1-877-635-2648**.

Information that identifies other people will be blocked out, to protect their privacy.

It can take several months to receive a copy of your records.

Preserving the history of residential schools

The National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) has been created to preserve the history of Canada's residential school system. It is hosted at the University of Manitoba. It is the permanent home for the records of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC).

The NCTR invites those who made a claim in the IAP or ADR to add their records to its collection. These records will be available forever, to researchers and others who want to learn about the history and impact of Canada's Indian residential schools.

Information that identifies other people will be

blocked out, to respect everyone's privacy.

If you choose to preserve your records with the NCTR, send in a completed consent form and your records will be securely sent to the NCTR.

To get a consent form, call IAP Information toll free at **1-877-635-2648** or download the form from **www.MyRecordsMyChoice.ca**.

How would my records be used at the NCTR?

If you choose to preserve your records at the NCTR you may choose either restricted access or open access. "Restricted" means that your name and other information that identifies you is kept confidential. "Open" means that you could be publicly identified.

Can I get help?

Yes. Resolution Health Support Workers (RHSWs) can answer your questions and help you with forms. To find an RHSW in your area, call one of the toll-free information lines below, or ask at your band office.

To learn more

- **IAP Information**
toll free: 1-877-635-2648
online: <http://www.MyRecordsMyChoice.ca>
- **Assembly of First Nations**
toll free: 1-833-212-2688
email: iapdesk@afn.ca
online: www.afn.ca
- **Inuit Representatives:**
Contact for the Inuvialuit:
phone: 1-867-777-7018
email: ggruben@inuvialuit.com
online: <http://www.irc.inuvialuit.com/>
Contact for Makivik:
toll free: 1-800-369-7052
electronic communications can be submitted at:
<http://www.makivik.org/contact/>
online: <http://www.makivik.org>
- **National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR)**
toll free: 1-855-415-4534
email: NCTRrecords@umanitoba.ca
online: www.NCTR.ca

CALL FOR PARTICIPANTS

MENTAL ILLNESS AWARENESS WEEK 2020

SHARE YOUR STORY

MNBC's Ministry of Health is looking for up to five Métis individuals to share their experiences living with mental illness.

Selected participants will have their stories of resilience and mental illness shared during our Mental Illness Awareness Week 2020 campaign.

To learn more or to volunteer as a possible participant, please contact Jillian at jjones@mnbc.ca

LEARN MORE



MÉTIS NATION
BRITISH COLUMBIA

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS: RESILIENT ROOTS ISSUE #2

MÉTIS MENTAL HEALTH AND WELLNESS MAGAZINE

The Métis Youth Mental Health and Wellness Initiative is seeking submissions for the second issue of Resilient Roots: Métis Mental Health and Wellness magazine! This magazine works to raise Métis voices and perspectives, and to engage in topics around mental health and wellness.

There are many ways to share your voice, and submitted content for the magazine can come in many different forms - including traditional magazine articles; photo blogs; informational pieces; stories of personal experience; poetry; short stories; art; etc.

We welcome anybody who is interested to submit content! You do not need to be a professional writer, photographer, artist, etc. This magazine is meant to showcase a diverse range of Métis perspectives, and we encourage anybody who is interested to share their voice.

Submitted content must be related to the area of mental health and wellness – however this is a broad range that can cover many topics. If you are unsure if your content or idea meets this guideline, please get in touch!

Community Members and Métis individuals are encouraged to submit content, ideas, or questions for the magazine to the Métis Youth Mental Health and Wellness Initiative Facilitator at jjones@mnbc.ca.

THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS IS SEPTEMBER 30TH, 2020. SUBMITTED CONTENT MUST MEET SUBMISSION GUIDELINES (PLEASE SEE MAGAZINE CONTENT SUBMISSION GUIDELINES DOCUMENT).

TO LEARN MORE, PLEASE EMAIL JJONES@MNBC.CA





THANK YOU

To 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.





RECENT NEWSLETTER 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.

All past newsletter issues can be accessed on MNBC's COVID-19 website at:

<https://covid19.mnbc.ca/mnbc-covid-19-updates>



ISSUE 20. Amended provincial health orders from Dr. Bonnie Henry. What you do matters. BC gov: fall and winter preparedness plan. Pan(demic) pal. World Suicide Prevention Day 2020. Telus: free phones and plans to youth who have aged out of foster care. I-SPARC: LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion in the Context of Sport webinar.

ISSUE 25. Back to school: orientation week. CBC article: where do you need to wear a mask in BC? COVID-19 and seasonal allergies. Métis Terry Fox virtual event. International Overdose Awareness Day. Overdose awareness: women's awareness.

ISSUE 24. New measures to enforce COVID-19 public safety. Back-to-school plans for all BC school districts now posted online. MNBC K-12 restart survey. COVID-19 and the overdose crisis - two states of emergency colliding. Overdose awareness: Elder awareness. MNBC skin cancer awareness campaign.

ISSUE 23. BC State of Emergency continued. Emergency support for vulnerable people during COVID-19 continues. Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) extended. Helping children through a COVID-19 test. B.C.'s Back to School Plan. I-SPARC Online Healthy Living Leader Training. MNBC skin cancer awareness campaign.

ISSUE 22. Free webinar for parents. September 10th, 2020: return to school. Dr. Bonnie Henry's Good Times Guide. Statistics Canada Survey: Impacts of COVID-19 on Canadians - Experiences of Discrimination. Indian Residential School Resolution Health Support Program. I-SPARC's Return to Activity Guidelines. Canada-US Border Closure Extended. MNBC skin cancer awareness campaign.

ISSUE 21. Stay safe this summer. MNBC skin cancer awareness campaign. Mandatory mask use. Choose to Move! Health Canada hand sanitizer recall. Dr. Bonnie Henry's travel manners. Border closure extended to Aug 21st, 2020.