

News Release

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Have symptoms? Get tested for COVID-19

Vancouver, B.C. – Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is expanding access to COVID-19 testing as the Province of British Columbia moves to the next phase of its COVID-19 testing strategy. Anyone in the VCH region with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, however mild, can now be assessed for and get a COVID-19 test. Testing can be done through a primary care provider, walk-in clinic, urgent and primary care centre or community collection centre.

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses including the common cold. They include: fever, chills, cough, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, nasal congestion, painful swallowing, loss of sense of smell, headache, muscle aches, fatigue or loss of appetite.

While testing has expanded, not everyone needs a test. COVID-19 testing is not recommended for people without symptoms.

Contact your physician or nurse practitioner's office, or a local community collection centre to arrange for a test. Phone numbers and locations of collection centre can be found by visiting: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/testing> or by calling 8-1-1.

In Vancouver, the City Centre and REACH urgent and primary care centres can provide testing as well as the St. Vincent's drive-up location at 4875 Heather Street. On the North Shore, testing is available at the North Vancouver Urgent and Primary Care Centre. If you think you need testing, please call ahead before visiting your doctor, urgent and primary care center or health clinic.

While any individual with symptoms can be tested, those in the following groups will receive priority:

- Residents and staff of long term care facility
- Individuals requiring admission to hospital or likely to be admitted, such as pregnant individuals near term, patients on hemodialysis, or cancer patients receiving radiation or chemotherapy
- Healthcare workers

- Individuals with a higher probability of being infected with COVID-19 such as contacts of a known case of COVID-19 and travellers just returned to Canada.
- Residents of remote, isolated or Indigenous communities
- People living in congregate settings such as work-camps, correctional facilities, shelters, group homes, assisted living and seniors' residences
- People who are homeless or have unstable housing
- Essential service providers such as first responders

The Medical Health Officer may recommend testing for others, such as those who are part of an investigation of a cluster or outbreak.

For more information on COVID-19 and testing, please visit www.vch.ca/COVID19.

VCH is responsible for the delivery of \$3.6 billion in community, hospital and long-term care to more than one million people in communities including Richmond, Vancouver, the North Shore, Sunshine Coast, Sea to Sky corridor, Powell River, Bella Bella and Bella Coola. VCH also provides specialized care and services for people throughout BC, and is the province's hub of health care education and research.

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