

For Immediate Release | July 22, 2020

Help stop the spread of COVID-19 this summer

Vancouver, BC – Vancouver Coastal Health (VCH) is reminding the public, businesses and facility operators to remain vigilant against the spread of COVID-19 as more people are out in public enjoying summer in our region and businesses are restarting. VCH is launching a new webpage for the public to check for recent exposures at www.vch.ca/COVIDexposures.

The lifting of some restrictions, re-opening of businesses and attractions and increased social interactions people are having does increase the number of possible contacts individuals have in the community and can lead to more instances of potential public exposures in the event of positive cases.

“We know people are eager to get out and enjoy summer and we want to remind them that COVID-19 is still in our communities. We have to continue taking the measures we know are effective at keeping transmissions flat: Stay home if you’re sick, wash your hands, keep your social circles small and maintain physical distance when out in public,” said Dr. Mark Lysyshyn, VCH Deputy Chief Medical Health Officer. “Vancouver Coastal Health has already issued public notifications related to places where we’ve seen large groups of people go to socialize, mingle and party, such as bars and nightclubs. When people aren’t taking measures to protect themselves and others from COVID-19 in these settings, it means more potential risk to the public and more contacts for our Public Health teams to follow.”

VCH Public Health teams continue to follow up with all confirmed COVID-19 cases and their close contacts. VCH is launching its public exposures website for situations where Public Health determines there may have been low-risk public exposures of COVID-19 and are unable to contact all possible contacts. The location and specified date and time of these exposures will be posted to www.vch.ca/COVIDexposures.

Anyone who has visited the listed locations at the specified times are simply asked to monitor themselves for symptoms and continue with their daily activities. Anyone who develops symptoms, however mild, is asked to call their family doctor or 8-1-1, seek testing and then self-isolate. Notifications related to flights, work sites, cruises, long-distance bus and train travel and public events are posted on the B.C. Centre for Disease Control’s [public exposures](http://www.health.gov.bc.ca/public-exposures) website.

VCH Environmental Health also continues to work with WorkSafeBC to help businesses and facility operators develop safety plans and provide support in complying with Provincial Health Officer Orders. COVID-19 safety plans templates for restaurants, cafes, pubs and personal service establishments such as salons, along with other resources such as checklists for farmers’ markets, are available at www.vch.ca/COVID-19. Guidance documents that VCH has prepared for licenced businesses during the pandemic can be found under the [Environmental Health section](#) of our Vancouver Coastal website at

www.vch.ca. Additional information can be found on the [WorkSafeBC](#) and [BC Centre for Disease Control](#) websites

COVID-19 is spread by respiratory droplets when a person who is sick coughs or sneezes. It can also be spread when a healthy person touches an object or surface (e.g. a doorknob or a table) with the virus on it, and then touches their mouth, nose or eyes before washing their hands. Most people who get COVID-19 have only mild disease, but a few people can get very sick and may need to go to hospital. The symptoms of COVID-19 may include fatigue, loss of appetite, fever, cough, sore throat, runny nose, loss of smell and/or diarrhea.

Vancouver Coastal Health (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 B.C., and is the province's hub of health care education and research.

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