

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS AWARENESS

Making safe decisions about going back to work and school



Symptoms of COVID-19 can be similar to symptoms of the common cold, influenza and seasonal allergies. This makes it challenging to make decisions about when it is appropriate to go to work or send your children to school during the COVID-19 pandemic.

This guide, developed by nurses from Ts'ewulhtun Health Centre of Cowichan Tribes, uses the latest COVID-19 science and information to help you make wise decisions to keep you, your family and our community safe during this time.

In this guide you will find information on COVID-19 symptoms, how to self-assess for COVID-19 symptoms, when and how to self-isolate, and answers to frequently asked questions.

COVID-19 SYMPTOMS

The symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses, including the flu and common cold. The most common symptoms of COVID-19 include:

- Fever
- Chills
- Cough or worsening of chronic cough
- Shortness of breath
- Sore throat
- Loss of sense of smell or taste
- Runny nose
- Headache
- Fatigue
- Diarrhea
- Loss of appetite
- Nausea and vomiting
- Muscle aches

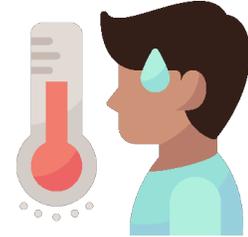
See appendix for name of symptoms in Hul'q'umi'num

While less common, symptoms can also include:

- Stuffy nose
- Conjunctivitis (pink eye)
- Dizziness, confusion
- Abdominal pain
- Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes.

COVID-19 symptoms can range from **mild to severe**. Sometimes people with COVID-19 have mild illness, but their symptoms may suddenly worsen in a few days. Some people who are infected with COVID-19 do not have symptoms of illness.

Fever: The average normal body temperature taken orally is about 37°C. For more information on normal body temperature and fevers, see HealthLinkBC's information for [children age 11 and younger](#) and for [people age 12 and older](#). Infants less than three months of age who have a fever should be assessed by a health care provider.



Symptoms in Children: Children infected with COVID-19 may have similar symptoms to adults, but are less likely to have a fever, shortness of breath or a cough. In most cases, COVID-19 causes mild illness or **no symptoms** at all in children.

- *As of Sept 21st, in BC, school age children's COVID-19 screening removed runny nose, headache and sore throat from the list of symptoms. Parents should still be cautious if their child has any of these symptoms, and consider keeping them home until symptoms subside.*

If someone is having severe difficulty breathing, severe chest pain, having a hard time waking up, feeling confused or losing consciousness, you should immediately seek emergency medical care by calling 9-1-1 or going to your nearest emergency department.

Differences Between Seasonal Allergies, COVID-19, The Common Cold and Influenza

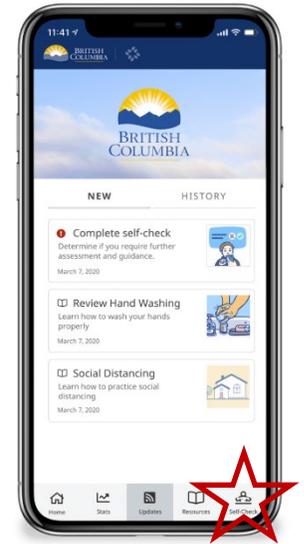


If you or someone in your household is showing COVID-19 like symptoms, it might be hard to know whether it is COVID-19 or a regular cold, flu or allergies. We have provided a table at the end of this guide to help you understand the differences. See ***Appendix for Differences between COVID-19, Seasonal Allergies, the Cold and Influenza.***

SELF-ASSESSMENT

Staff, parents and students must complete daily self-assessments to check for symptoms of the common cold, influenza or COVID-19 prior to attending work or school. Parents and caregivers must assess their child daily for symptoms before sending them to school or daycare.

It is recommended that all Cowichan Tribes employees, parents and caregivers use the **BC COVID-19 app** for access to the self-assessment tool (self-check – bottom right corner of screen) and other useful COVID-19 related information. The app can be accessed online at: <https://bc.thrive.health/> or downloaded to your cell phone or tablet. A self-assessment checklist is also provided at the end of this guide. See *Appendix for COVID-19 Self-Assessment checklist.*



STAYING HOME & SELF-ISOLATING

Students, staff or other persons must stay home and self-isolate for 14 days if they have any of the following:

- Have travelled outside Canada in the last 14 days (this is called [quarantine](#))
- Identified as a close contact of a confirmed COVID-19 case
- Are being tested for COVID-19 and are waiting for your results (see note in blue below)
- Confirmed cases of COVID-19 - must self-isolate for at least 14 days or 10 days after onset of symptoms, whichever is longer

Coughing may persist for several weeks, so coughing alone does not require you to continue to isolate.

When Experiencing Multiple Symptoms of Illness

Ensure you isolate immediately and avoid contact with others if you or your child are experiencing a **FEVER OR MORE THAN ONE** of the key symptoms of illness (chills, chronic cough, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, diarrhea).

Call the **Island Health COVID-19 Call Centre: 1-844-901-8442 (Mon – Sun 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) for assessment and testing.** If a person has any underlying medical health condition, it is important for that person to contact their doctor for further medical follow-up or **call 8-1-1** to speak to a nurse at HealthLinkBC (if after hours).

When Experiencing One Symptom of Illness

If you or your child are experiencing **ONLY ONE** of the key symptoms of illness (chills, chronic cough, shortness of breath, loss of smell or taste, diarrhea), but **do NOT have a fever**, you should stay home for **24 hours** from when the symptom started. If the symptom improves, you may return to work or school when you feel well enough. If the symptom persists or worsens, seek a health assessment.

Please do not self-diagnose yourself or take over the counter medications and go to work/send your child to school. Stay home, self-isolate until you have:

- Clearance from a negative COVID-19 test (for those who required testing); or
- Your symptoms have improved and you feel well (for those who did not require COVID-19 testing).

While you are self-isolating at home and/or waiting for your test result,

- Wear a mask if you must be in the same room with others in your home or when you leave your home for medical follow-up to get a COVID-19 test or to see your doctor.
- Cover coughs & sneezes.
- Wash your hands.
- Do not share household items.
- Flush the toilet with the lid down.
- Clean/disinfect surfaces touched.
- Do not have visitors to your home, if needed have someone pick-up groceries or prescriptions for you and drop it off (some pharmacies deliver without charge).

If you do not have support, Cowichan Tribes members can access support by calling COVID-19 Community Navigators at 250-715-3339 or by email covid19@cowichantribes.com

GETTING TESTED

Testing is recommended for anyone with cold, influenza or COVID-19-like symptoms, even mild ones. Getting tested for COVID-19 when you or household member are experiencing symptoms is critical to stop the spread of COVID-19. This is especially important if:

- You or anyone in your home has underlying health conditions
- You may be in contact with Elders
- You plan to leave the home and may be around others

If you are unsure whether you need testing, you can use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool found online at <https://bc.thrive.health/> or in the BC COVID-19 app. For more information on COVID-19 testing visit the [BC Center For Disease Control's – Testing Information](#) website.

For more information on what it is like to get tested, watch [Getting tested for COVID-19 video](#) with Cowichan Tribes member Kimberly Edwards.

Testing for Children

Children getting tested can now do the 'Swish test' which is a non-invasive and easy way to be tested for COVID-19. More information can be found by watching the following video created by the Provincial Health Services Authority (PHSA): [Mouth rinse and gargle COVID-19 test for school aged children](#).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

- 1. WHAT IF I DON'T HAVE A DOCTOR?** If you or a family do not have a doctor and are status First Nation, please call FNHA virtual doctor of the day 1-855-344-3800 to book an appointment. Medical Office Assistants are available to help seven days per week from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.
- 2. WHAT IF I HAVE SEASONAL ALLERGIES OR AN EXISTING MEDICAL CONDITION THAT HAS COVID-LIKE SYMPTOMS?** Those who experience seasonal allergies or other COVID-19-like symptoms that are related to an existing medical condition, through medical consultation and assessment with a doctor, can continue to attend school when they are experiencing these symptoms as normal. If they are experiencing any change in symptoms, that are new or worsening, they should self-isolate and follow the self-isolation procedures in this guide.
- 3. WHAT IF SOMEONE IN MY HOME HAS A COLD OR FLU, DO I NEED TO STAY HOME TOO?**

You or your child may attend work or school if a member of your household is sick, providing that they are seeking medical attention, and that you and your child are not showing symptoms of illness and are completing daily self-assessments and monitoring for symptoms.

You or your child must stay home if another member of your home has received a positive test for COVID-19 or they have been in contact with someone who tested positive for COVID-19.
- 4. WHAT IF I OR MY CHILD BEGIN TO FEEL SICK WHILE AT WORK OR SCHOOL?**

If a staff member or student experiences symptoms of COVID-19 while at school, staff will immediately separate the symptomatic student or staff member from others, have the ill student (if able) or staff member wear a mask and make arrangements for that student or staff member to be picked up or go home. Cleaning/disinfecting of any areas used by the student or staff member will be immediately undertaken.
- 5. WILL TAKING OVER THE COUNTER MEDICATIONS STOP THE SPREAD OF COVID-19, THE COLD OR FLU?** Using over the counter medications when a person is ill will not prevent the spread of cold, flu or COVID-19. Therefore, seek medical attention if any student or staff is experiencing cold, flu or COVID-19 symptoms, get tested and follow-up with your doctor.

APPENDIX

Differences between Seasonal Allergies, COVID-19, Cold and Flu. See how similar and different the symptoms can be.

Symptoms	Seasonal Allergies	Covid-19 Symptoms range from mild to severe	Common Cold Gradual onset of symptoms	Flu Abrupt onset of symptoms
Incubation period	Varies	2-14 days	1-3 days	1- 4 days
Symptoms onset	Varies	Gradual	7 -10 days	3 - 7 days
Fever	No	Common 37.8°C or higher	Rare	Common 37.8°C – 38.9°C, lasts 3-4 days
Chills	No	Common	Rare	Common
Cough or Worsening Chronic Cough	Sometimes	Common, usually dry	Common, Mild	Common (usually day)
Shortness of Breath	Sometimes (due to asthma)	Common	Less common (due to asthma)	Yes
Sore Throat	No	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Runny Nose	Common	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Loss of sense of smell or taste	No	Common	Sometimes with loss of smell	Sometimes with loss of smell
Headache	Sometimes	Common	Rare	Common, intense
Fatigue	Sometimes, progresses slowly	Sometimes	Sometimes	Common, starts early & severe
Diarrhea	No	Common	No	Sometimes
Loss of appetite	No	Common	Reduced	Yes
Nausea & Vomiting	No	Sometimes	Sometimes	Sometimes
Muscle Aches	No	Common	Common	Common

Symptoms	Seasonal Allergies	Covid-19 Symptoms range from mild to severe	Common Cold Gradual onset of symptoms	Flu Abrupt onset of symptoms
Stuffy Nose	Common	Sometimes	Common	Sometimes
Watery, red or swollen eyes	Common	Rare (pink eye)	Rare (pink eye)	Rare (pink eye)
Dizziness, Confusion	No	Rare	No	Sometimes
Abdominal Pain		Rare		
Skin rashes or discoloration of fingers or toes	No but eczema is common	Rare	No	No
Itchy nose, eyes or roof of mouth	Common	No	No	No

COVID-19 Self Assessment Checklist

COVID-19 NOVEL CORONAVIRUS

Please complete the following questions before beginning your work today.

Name: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Do you have any of the following:



Fever



Cough



Shortness of breath



Sore throat



Runny nose



Feeling unwell

Yes Have you been in close contact with someone who is
No sick or has confirmed COVID-19 in the past 14 days?

Yes Have you returned from travel outside Canada in the
No past 14 days?

If you answered YES to any of these questions, go home and self-isolate right away. Call your doctor or 8-1-1 or the Island Health COVID-19 Call Centre: 1-844-901-8442 (Mon – Sun 8:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.) for assessment and testing.

Above checklist and visuals are courtesy of Ottawa Public Health

Nilh 'o' skweys tu COVID-19

(Typical symptoms of COVID-19 infection)



Hani' kw'uni' tsxulh st'e 'ukwthu ni'wulh shhwunem tst, 'i' skw'ey kws 'uw-wu 'o' hun'ts'ulithut 'ukw' 'apun skweyul, wa'wa' s-hi'ts, 'o' haytse', 'i' niis hep 'ukwthey' ni' shq'aq's. 'I' helh nems q'a'thu 'uth siiye'yus.

(Anyone who has these symptoms **MUST SELF ISOLATE** for a minimum of 10 days or until symptoms resolve, whichever is longer.)

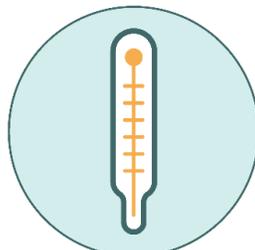
'Untsu kwus ni' xuxulh?

(Where do you feel the pain?)



Tl'utl'its' s-hets'um

(Shortness of breath)



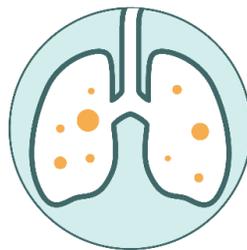
Huy'qw-thut

(Fever)



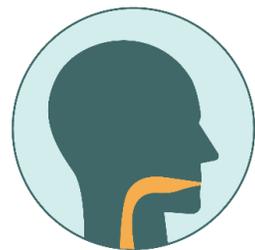
hwel'shum' muqsun

(Runny nose)



'a'kw'ulhnuh

(Difficulty breathing)



suyum shhwuthqun

(Sore throat)



taqw'um

(Cough)

Cowichan Tribes COVID-19 Response
Please visit [cowichantribes.com](https://www.cowichantribes.com) for more information