

Dear Fellow Sunshine Coast Residents:

As we continue to see over a thousand new cases of COVID-19 across Canada daily, it is clear that we are not out of the woods yet. Here in British Columbia we continue to average close to thirty new cases daily. While this number is slowly coming down, it is clear that COVID-19 remains active in our province. Without more information, we do not know the true state of COVID-19 in our communities and we need to be as vigilant as ever about protecting each other.

This week, COVID-19 testing has been expanded to include all British Columbians with cold or flu symptoms. With this increased testing capacity, we are taking the first step to getting an accurate picture of COVID-19 cases in our community. This will also allow us to rapidly identify new infections and to trace contacts who might have been affected.

With the new recommendations, the Respiratory Assessment Clinic is now able to assess and test anyone on the Sunshine Coast who develops possible COVID-19 symptoms. The expanded testing is a significant change from previous policy, so please make sure to inform everyone you know.

As we learn more about the different ways that COVID-19 can present, the symptoms we are looking for have evolved. Fever, cough and difficulty breathing remain the most common symptoms, but COVID-19 infection can also include a new runny nose, a sore throat, muscle aches, chills, headaches, fatigue, nausea, vomiting and/or diarrhea.

If you do develop any of the above symptoms, please call your family doctor or contact the Respiratory Assessment Clinic directly for further assessment and testing (if indicated). Most of the time this will be on the same day. Anyone who is seen at the Clinic will also receive a follow up phone call or appointment within 24 - 48 hours.

While the increased testing will give us more information, it will still be weeks at best before we can start lifting restrictions. Please continue to act as though COVID-19 is here on the Sunshine Coast (it is!) and take every precaution to protect yourself and our community.

If you develop mild cold or flu symptoms and get swabbed, you will still be required to self-isolate until you are cleared. If your test comes back positive, you will need to continue self-isolating, as will anyone that you have been in contact with. Public Health will follow up with all of your recent contacts and arrange for further assessment and testing where necessary. Self isolation guidelines are available at the [BC CDC](#) website.

If you develop more severe cold or flu-like symptoms and feel you need to see a doctor, please call or text the Respiratory Assessment Clinic at 604-740-1252 or email <mailto:coastrespclinic@gmail.com>. If your symptoms are severe enough to require an ambulance to get to hospital, please call 911.

Please note that the Respiratory Assessment Clinic is open seven days a week from 8:30 AM to 4:30 PM and is intended for people living or staying on the Sunshine Coast.

Please check the Coast Reporter and the Local Weekly websites regularly for updates on COVID-19 in our community, and tune in daily on Eastlink Community TV at 5:30, 7:30 and 10 p.m. The SCR and the Town of Sechelt are also putting out regular COVID-19 emergency updates with community-specific information on local government services.



**Keep well, wash your hands, keep your distance, and stay at home** unless you have a medical emergency or another essential task! And **please keep howling!**

**The Sunshine Coast COVID Physician Task Force**

-Dr Jennifer Baxter  
-Dr Herman Mentz  
-Dr Daren Spithoff

-Dr Ted Krickan  
-Dr Brian Nelson

