

THE CORONAVIRUS PANDEMIC

A WELLNESS UPDATE FROM EEKAI CHARITY

<https://www.eekai.org/>

THE PANDEMIC

In December 2019, Wuhan, China saw the world's first outbreak of COVID-19. January 2020 marked the discovery of the first case of COVID-19 in the province of British Columbia. Since then, cases in Canada have increased drastically to over 45 000 with more than 2400 deaths in the nation (as of April 25th 2020). You can find updated statistics at this [link](#).

The pandemic has quickly become the largest, most devastating public health crisis in decades. Amidst this panic, front-line workers such as health care providers, grocery store employees and city workers among others have risen to the challenge, putting their lives on the line for others. We would like to applaud the outstanding efforts of these workers in dealing with the COVID-19 crisis.



GOVERNMENT EFFORTS

The Canadian government has stepped up efforts in recent weeks to contain the spread of COVID-19. Over \$1 billion dollars is being allocated to the public health sector to ensure the health and safety of citizens. Funds will lend support to the international response and essential government services in addition to helping stabilize the economy. Further information about these allocations can be found on this [website](#).

Organizations have done a good job adapting to these circumstances as many workplaces and educational institutions have shifted to online modalities. The Canadian government has recently introduced a plethora of financial assistance programs to benefit those affected by COVID-19. The Canada Emergency Response Benefit (CERB) provides aid to workers who were forced to stop working as a result of the pandemic. For employers, the Canada Emergency Wage Subsidy can help businesses that have lost a certain percentage of their revenue due to the outbreak. The Proposed Canada Emergency Student Benefit aims to assist post-secondary students who have lost work as a result of the pandemic. For a comprehensive list of financial aid programs and their qualifying criteria, you can consult [CBC's website](#).

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS ABOUT COVID-19

How is COVID-19 Spread?

COVID-19 is spread from infected carriers through respiratory droplets generated from coughs and sneezes. It can also spread if one comes into contact with the virus and then touches their mouth, nose or eyes before washing their hands.

What are the symptoms of COVID-19?

It is important to note that some individuals infected with the virus can be asymptomatic for a period of time. Symptoms can take up to 14 days to appear after initial exposure. These can include fever, cough, difficulty breathing, sore throat, fatigue and a runny nose among others. If you experience any of these symptoms, contact your family physician or a COVID-19 screening centre.

Should I wear a mask?

If you are healthy, the use of a mask is not necessary. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 you should consult a health care professional and will likely be asked to wear a mask.

How can I prevent COVID-19?

There is no available vaccine for this virus and no natural products work to protect against it. Misinformation about the virus is widespread with theories suggesting that one can test themselves for infection by holding their breath or that gargling salt water is an effective safeguard. It is crucial that we only consult trusted sources for this kind of information.

Proper handwashing with soap or sanitizer (>60% alcohol), social distancing and thorough cleaning of areas you come into contact with are effective prevention measures.

How long will this pandemic last?

While COVID-19 has caused significant disruptions to daily life and business, it is important that we continue following governmental regulations regarding social distancing and stay-at-home orders. Slowing the spread of this disease is paramount and although most will recover, we must do our part to protect those most at risk, the immunocompromised (e.g. elderly, those with diabetes and asthma). Prevention measures must be relaxed in a slow and controlled manner and may take weeks or months to be implemented. In the meantime, we suggest spending time with family, trying new hobbies and staying active.

How long can the virus survive on surfaces?

Current evidence suggests that COVID-19 can remain on surfaces for hours to days depending on the material. Regular cleaning of high-touch surfaces like doorknobs, tables and chairs with EPA-registered disinfectants are recommended. Consult the [CDC's website](#) for further guidelines and recommendations on how to clean and disinfect your home.

What should I do if I suspect I have COVID-19?

If you are sick, it is crucial that you follow these steps to reduce contact with others:

- Remain at home and ensure you self-isolate
 - Should you leave your house, wear a mask and cover your mouth/nose when coughing and sneezing
 - Follow social distancing rules (2 metres)
- Do not have visitors at your house
- Have family and friends bring you groceries and other supplies you need
- It is important to remember that most people with mild coronavirus illness will recover on their own.

If you are concerned about your symptoms and/or possible exposure to COVID-19, please contact Telehealth at **1-866-797-0000** (open 24 hours) or the Canadian COVID-19 information line at **1-833-784-4397**

Further Information

There is a great deal of information being spread about COVID-19 and it is easy to feel overwhelmed as a result. The information we have provided is by no means comprehensive and if you would like to learn more, we would recommend that you consult these websites:

[World Health Organization](#): Provides information and guidelines as the situation continually evolves.

[Health Canada](#): Find out about Canada's response to COVID-19 in addition to information about financial support for citizens through CERB.

[Public Health Ontario](#): Discover how the province is adapting to the outbreak and receive information about surveillance and laboratory testing.

[Telehealth Ontario](#)