



Wikwemikong Health Centre

COVID-19 Handbook:  
For You and Your Family

March 12, 2020

## Preamble

This Handbook is prepared for the community members of the Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory to assist in the delivery of education on the Coronavirus (COVID-19).

It is important to take additional precautions to avoid contracting the virus and to prevent the spread of the virus within our community.

On March 5, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) called on every country to act with speed, scale and clear-minded determination. The message is as follows:

“The WHO is concerned that in some countries the level of commitment and the actions that demonstrate that commitment do not match the level of threat we all face. WHO has advised that this is a time for pulling out all the stops, to review emergency plans, to educate the public, to ensure essential supplies are available, to train our health workers and to be ready. Ultimately, how deadly this virus will be dependant not only on the virus itself, but how we respond to it. We are all responsible for reducing our own risk of infection, and if we’re infected, for reducing our risk of infecting others. There’s something all of us can do to protect vulnerable people in our communities.”

On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization officially confirmed the COVID-19 as a Pandemic, as it is affecting over 100 countries worldwide.

On March 9, 2020, the Wikwemikong Health Centre met with the Wikwemikong Emergency Control Group to discuss the Wikwemikong Health Centre Pandemic Plan. They also discussed the necessary planning, community education, preparedness and other concerns that arose.

This handbook is not intended to create fear; rather it is intended to provide educational materials to our community members.

## Epidemic and Pandemic Defined

- **Epidemic** - as a regional outbreak of an illness that spreads unexpectedly.
- **Pandemic** - as “the worldwide spread of a new disease” that affects large numbers of people. (2010)

## What is the Coronavirus (COVID-19)

The Coronavirus (COVID-19) is a new disease that has not been previously identified in humans.

Coronaviruses (CoV) are a large family of viruses that cause illness ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases, such as:

- [Middle East Respiratory Syndrome \(MERS-CoV\)](#)
- [Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome \(SARS-CoV\)](#)
- [A novel coronavirus \(nCoV\)](#) is a new strain that has not been previously identified in humans, such as COVID-19.

Coronaviruses are **zoonotic**, meaning they are **transmitted between animals and people**. Detailed investigations found that:

- SARS-CoV was transmitted from civet cats to humans
- MERS-CoV was transmitted from dromedary camels to humans
- Several known coronaviruses are circulating in animals that have not yet infected humans.

## What are the Symptoms?

Those with COVID-19 may have little or no symptoms. You may not know you have the symptoms because they are similar to the cold or flu.

Symptoms may take up to 14 days to appear after you have come in contact with it.

**Common Signs of Infection** include:

- Fever
- Cough (Dry Cough)
- Shortness of Breath / Breathing Difficulties

## **What is the Risk Factor for More Severe Cases?**

There is an increased risk factor of more severe outcomes for people who are Elderly (Aged 60 and Over), and for people who have:

- Compromised immune systems
- Underlying chronic medical conditions
- Chronic lung problems
- Cardiovascular disease
- Diabetes

In more **Severe Cases**, infection can cause:

- Pneumonia
- Kidney Failure
- And even Death

## **How is COVID-19 Transmitted?**

It is believed to be transmitted by:

- Droplets when coughing, sneezing, touching contaminated surface then touching eyes, nose or mouth. (T-Zone)
- Direct contact with a sick person
- Surfaces recently touched by an infected person.

## **What is the Incubation Period?**

The incubation period is between 2 to 14 days after exposure. It is recommended that people self-isolate for a period of 14 days.

## **Is there a Treatment, Cure or Vaccine for COVID-19?**

No. Unfortunately, there is no treatment, cure or vaccine for COVID-19. Further, the flu vaccine does not protect against COVID-19.

The treatment that can be offered is:

- Supportive Care unless you require further interventions due to difficulty breathing or you develop a co-infection (pneumonia)

There is a recovery rate of 80% for people who experience mild cases, and a 20% rate for those experiencing more severe cases.

## What is the Prevention and Treatment to Avoid the Spread of COVID-19?

We can all work together to prevent the spread of the COVID-19 and to protect ourselves and others by:

- Practicing regular hand washing with soap and warm water for 20 seconds, or the use of alcohol-based hand sanitizer if soap and water are not available.
- Coughing or sneezing into your upper sleeve, rather than into your hands, or into a tissue and discard the tissue promptly into a waste bin.
- Avoiding close contact: with people who are sick.
- Avoiding touching your eyes, nose or mouth.
- Staying home when you are sick to avoid transmitting the illness to others.
- Cleaning and disinfecting frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as tables, countertops, door handles, light switches, toilets, sink, faucets, cell phones, remote controls, computer keyboards, toys, and money.
- Cleaning and disinfecting with the use of regular household cleaning spray or wipe.
- There is no specific treatment or vaccine for COVID-19, but studies are underway to find effective treatments and vaccines.

## What Can Families Do?

- Do not “panic shop”. Buy only enough to manage should you need to self-isolate for two-weeks.
- Ensure you have your regular medications refilled.
- Limit close contact with others by standing approximately 2 meters away.
- Avoiding non-essential travel and reducing exposure to crowded places.

## Being Prepared

Although China remains the epicentre of the COVID-19 outbreak, more countries are reporting cases. Some countries may not have the capacity to detect or contain the disease. This means global efforts to stop the spread of the disease may not be enough to prevent a pandemic (global outbreak).

While a COVID-19 outbreak is not unexpected in Canada, our public health system is prepared to respond. Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), along with provincial, territorial and community partners, continues to reassess the public health risk, based on the best available evidence as the situation evolves.

In order to mitigate the impacts of COVID-19, **everyone has a role to play**. It takes more than governments and action from the health sector to protect the health and safety of Canadians. Each of us can help our country be prepared in the event of an emergency by understanding [how coronavirus spreads](#) and [how to prevent illness](#).

## For Individuals

People should continue to think ahead about the actions that they can take to stay healthy and prevent the spread of any illness, especially respiratory infections.

They can:

- Stay home if you are sick.
- Change how you greet one another. Rather than a handshake, hug or a kiss, try giving a wave, nod or a smile which are less likely to expose you to respiratory viruses.
- Practice frequent [hand hygiene](#) and [coughing and sneezing etiquette](#).
- Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces, such as toys and door handles.

## Make a Plan

If COVID-19 becomes common in your community, you should have a plan on how to reduce the risk of infection.

Your plan should include how you can change your regular habits to reduce your exposure to crowded places:

- Refill your prescriptions now to avoid going out to the pharmacy if you do become sick. Consider seeing your health care provider to renew your prescriptions ahead of time.
- Do your grocery shopping during off-peak hours.

Your plan should also include:

- What to do if you get sick.
- If you are a caregiver of children or dependents, you will want to engage backup caregivers.
- What you will do if a member of your family becomes sick and needs care.
- Talk to your employer about working from home if you are needed to care for a family member at home. If you become ill, stay home until you are no longer showing symptoms.
- Include shopping for supplies that you should have on hand at all times, to avoid leaving your home while you are sick or busy caring for an ill family member.
- Let your family, friends and neighbours know that you are making plans to prepare for COVID-19. Share your plan with them, as they may want to make their own plan.
- Talk to them about a buddy system in which you agree to check in on each other and run essential errands if you become sick.
- Build on the kits you have prepared for other potential emergencies.

Buy non-perishable food items such as:

- Dried pasta and sauce
- Prepared canned soups
- Canned vegetables and beans

It is also a good idea to have extra stores of:

- Pet food
- Toilet paper
- Facial tissue
- Feminine hygiene products
- Diapers (if you have children who use them)
- Depends

The reason for stocking up on these items is not necessarily because you will need to self-isolate, but having these supplies on hand so you will not have to leave your home at the peak of the outbreak or if you become ill.

## **How to Care for Those Who are ill**

If you or a member of your family become ill with COVID-19, there are precautions that should be taken in the home. Your doctor will advise you if hospital care is more appropriate.

To prepare for this potential situation, you should have on hand:

- Soap
- Facial tissue
- Paper towels
- Alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Household cleaning products
- Regular detergents for washing dishes and doing laundry
- Fever-reducing medications, such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen
  - this includes products for children if you are a parent or caregiver
- Plastic garbage bags for containing soiled tissues and other waste

## **Get Reliable Information**

Make sure that you get high-quality information about COVID-19 from reliable sources:

- The Wkwemikong Health Centre
- The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)
- Provincial and territorial public health authorities
- The World Health Organization (WHO)

## If You Are Sick

**Call ahead to your doctor's office if you develop a fever, cough, difficulty breathing and you have travelled to an affected country, or you have been in contact with someone known to have COVID-19. This will help the doctor to take steps to keep other people from getting infected or exposed.** Tell the doctor about your recent contact. Your doctor will advise you if hospital care is more appropriate based on the severity of your symptoms.

- People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to isolate at home during their illness. Activities outside of the home should be restricted except for getting medical care. **DO NOT** go to work, school or public areas. Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing or taxis.
- Separate yourself from other people and animals in your home. As much as possible, stay in a specific room and away from other people in your home.
- You should wear a facemask that covers your nose and mouth completely to avoid spreading the virus.
- Cover your coughs and sneezes – cough and sneeze into your sleeve/arms.
- Clean and wash your hands often with soap and water or use alcohol based hand sanitizer.
- Avoid sharing personal household items – dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels or bedding.
- Clean all “high touch” surfaces everyday – doorknobs, counters, tabletops, refrigerator doors, stove handle and knobs/touch buttons, bathroom fixtures, faucets, toilets, phones, remote controls, keyboards, tablets, bedside tables, etc.
- Monitor your symptoms. **SEEK IMMEDIATE MEDICAL ATTENTION IF YOUR ILLNESS WORSENS.** (example – difficulty breathing and/or chest pain).

## How to Care for Those Who are Ill

If you or a member of your family become ill with COVID-19, there are precautions that should be taken in the home. If the loved one is older or an infant and is experiencing fever, cough, trouble breathing or shortness of breath or breathing rapidly, or have underlying medical conditions – it is important to call 911 immediately and seek medical attention.

- Make sure you understand and can help your loved one follow their healthcare provider's instructions for medication and care. You should help your loved ones with basic needs.
- Monitor your loved one's symptoms. If the symptoms get worse call 911.
- Household members should stay in another room or be separated from the sick individual as much as possible.
- Prohibit visitors who do not have an essential need to be in the home.
- Do not handle pets when sick.

- Ensure that shared spaces have good air flow.
- Ensure that handwashing is completed often with soap and water. Alcohol based hand sanitizer is also recommended.
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth with unwashed hands.
- Sick people should wear a facemask when around other people.
- Wear a facemask and disposable gloves when you have contact with a sick person and dispose of the facemask and gloves after using them in a lined container before disposing them with other household waste. Wash hands with soap and water immediately after handling the items.
- Avoid sharing household items – dishes, drinking glasses, water bottles, cups, eating utensils, towels, bedding or other items. After use, wash them thoroughly.
- Clean all “high touch” surfaces everyday – doorknobs, counters, tabletops, bathroom fixtures, toilets, phones, keyboards, tablets, bedside tables, etc.

## **Talking to Children About COVID-19**

It is important to remember that children look to adults for guidance on how to react to stressful events.

- Caregivers should reassure children that adults are working hard to ensure that people stay healthy.
- Helping children cope with anxiety requires providing accurate prevention information and facts without causing undue alarm.
- Teaching children preventative measures, talking to them about their fears, and giving them a sense of control over their risk of infection can help reduce anxiety.

## **Review and Model Basic Hygiene and Healthy Lifestyle Practices**

Encourage your child to practice every day good hygiene—simple steps to prevent spread of illness:

- Wash their hands multiple times a day for at least 20 seconds.
- Cover their mouths with a tissue when they sneeze or cough and throw away the tissue immediately, or sneeze or cough into the bend of their elbow.
- Do not share food or drinks.
- Practice giving a wave, nod or smile, instead of handshakes. Fewer germs are spread this way.
- Giving children guidance on what they can do to prevent infection gives them a greater sense of control over disease spread and will help to reduce their anxiety.
- Encourage your child to eat a balanced diet, get enough sleep, and exercise regularly; this will help them develop a strong immune system to fight off illness.

## Important Numbers

<b>NAME</b>	<b>NUMBER</b>
<b>Emergency Services for Ambulance, Police, or Fire</b>	<b>911</b>
<b>Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory</b>	<b>1-705-859-3122</b>
<b>Mindemoya Hospital</b>	<b>705-377-5311</b>
<b>Little Current Family Health Team Clinic</b>	<b>705-368-2300</b>
<b>Health Centre Ontario Telehealth</b>	<b>1-866-797-0000</b>
<b>Noojmowen Teg Health Centre</b>	<b>1-705-368-2182</b>
<b>Assignack Family Health Team</b>	<b>1-705-859-2170</b>
<b>Mnis I.D.A. Pharmacy</b>	<b>1-705-859-2866</b>
<b>Manitowaning Guardian Pharmacy</b>	<b>1-705-859-2323</b>
<b>Wiky Tribal Police Services</b>	<b>1-705-859-3141</b>

## Conclusion

It is important we educate ourselves and be mindful of the everyday practices we do. We all have a role and responsibility in taking preventative measures against any type of illness.

Keep up to date on what is happening locally, provincially and nationally.

Wiikwemkoong Unceded Territory will continue to monitor the situation as it relates to COVID-19.

We attach helpful documentation for your information, review and use.