

What?

Coronaviruses are a large family of viruses which may cause illness in animals or humans. In humans, several coronaviruses are known to cause respiratory infections ranging from the common cold to more severe diseases such as Middle East Respiratory Syndrome (MERS) and Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS). The most recently discovered coronavirus causes coronavirus disease COVID-19.

The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. Some patients may have aches and pains, nasal congestion, runny nose, sore throat or diarrhea. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually (World Health Organization).

- Fever
- Chills
- Shortness of breath,
- Cough
- Difficulty Swallowing (*If this is not typical for the person*)
- Decrease or loss of sense of taste or smell
- Extreme Tiredness
- Muscle aches/ joint pain
- Sore throat
- Runny or stuffy / congested nose
- Headache
- Nausea, vomiting and / or diarrhea

How is COVID-19 spread?

People can catch COVID-19 from others who have the virus. The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 coughs or exhales. These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these objects or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth. People can also catch COVID-19 if they breathe in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets. This is why it is important to stay more than 2 meters (6 feet) away from a person who is sick.

PPE is intended to protect the wearer and to minimize their risk of exposure to COVID-19 and other potential hazards. The effectiveness of PPE depends on using it correctly and consistently.

Below are some steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19:

Handwashing: One of the best ways to prevent the spread of infection is to practice proper hand washing techniques. For proper handwashing techniques you can [click here](#) to access a step by step video from Public Health.

Hand Sanitizer: A 70-90% alcohol-based hand rub can be added to your hand hygiene routine: Apply the sanitizer to your hands. Continue to rub your hands together until the alcohol has been rubbed in. It should take about 20 seconds until hands feel dry. This should only be used when your hands are not visibly soiled.

Gowns: Disposable Level One gowns are to be worn when assisting people who are suspected or confirmed of having Covid-19.

Gloves: All staff must wear gloves when providing personal care to any supported person. Before entering, the room staff will put gloves on. Always remember to perform proper hand hygiene and completely dry hands before using gloves.

Social /Physical Distancing: Everyone should maintain at least 2 metres (6 feet) distance between yourself and anyone else.

Cleaning and Disinfecting: It is particularly important to clean and disinfect commonly used areas. When using a disinfectant follow the manufacturer instructions and reference the SDS (Safety Data Sheet).

Information and Signage: It is important that all people working in the location are aware that there is a case of COVID-19. A sign will be posted outside of the area where the person is self-isolating. As well as on the main entrance door at the location.

Masks: Masks wearing is no longer mandatory in most situations.

- Staff should “consider” wearing a mask for source control when providing prolonged direct (less than 2 meters and more than 15 minutes) care to supported people who are at high risk of severe outcomes (i.e., immunocompromised).
- Medical masks will be provided by CLDN and available to staff who would prefer to wear them on while on shift. These masks should be changed every 4 hours or sooner if damp, dirty or contaminated.
- Staff who test positive can return to work after their symptoms have been improved for 24 hours and no fever is present (where there were gastrointestinal symptoms, improvement should be noted over 48 hours before returning to work). For a total of 10 days after symptom onset or specimen collection, staff should adhere to workplace measures for reducing risk of transmission (e.g., masking for source control, not removing their masks unless eating or drinking, distancing from others as much as possible) and avoiding, if possible, the provision of care to people who are at the highest risk of severe COVID-19 infection.

N95 Respirators: A properly fit tested N95 respirator will be worn when providing care within 2 meters/ 6 feet of a person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID 19 and then changed immediately following providing direct care. N95 respirators will be worn for the duration of the shift if the infected person is not able to self isolate or in the case of a program in an outbreak.

Eye Protection: All staff will wear eye protection, which is provided by C.L.D.N when providing care within 2 meters/ 6 feet of a person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID 19

Eye Protection:

Eye protection needs to be:

1. *Intended for protection of mucous membranes involving the eyes; and,*
2. *A barrier to provide that protection.*

Eye protection should have some means of shielding the sides of the eyes/face by the way they wrap around so that droplets are less likely to land on the eyes.

Prescription glasses and sunglasses alone are not considered adequate eye protection.

When providing direct care within 2 meters / 6 feet of a person who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID 19 staff will wear a face shield, face shields will immediately be disinfected following providing direct care.

Eye protection will be disinfected by each employee prior to donning and after doffing as well as anytime it becomes damp, dirty, or contaminated, and directly following providing direct care to anyone who is suspected or confirmed to have COVID 19.

Eye protection will be disinfected using a disinfectant spray cleaner, a bleach/ water mixture, or a disinfectant wipe. Thoroughly cleaning the safety glasses and or face shield and the mechanism used to attach the shield to your head and or face.

Each program location has a stock of face shields for staff or an essential visitor who may arrive on location without eye protection to wear.

Donning and Doffing PPE: Review training on Surge learning and the [Donning](#) and [Doffing](#) Posters

Who?

Anyone can be affected by COVID-19 although older people, and those with underlying medical problems like high blood pressure, heart problems or diabetes, are more likely to develop serious illness. People with fever, cough and difficulty breathing should seek medical attention.

Reporting

- Always report all cases of COVID-19 or suspected COVID-19 to the COVID 19 Command Post email (Covid19CommandPost@cldn.ca) and your manager immediately.
- If you are not sure or have questions contact your Manager, Human Resources and/or a Joint Health and Safety Committee member.