

For Immediate Release | December 24, 2021

Stay safe as COVID-19 cases increase

IH-WIDE – As COVID-19 cases increase in other areas of British Columbia, Interior Health is advising residents in the Interior Region to expect a similar increase in cases in their communities, and urging to take steps to minimize their risk to COVID-19.

“Social connections with family and friends over the holidays are important. As we make plans to gather please take steps to decrease your risk of getting sick or spreading disease to others. Omicron is much more transmissible, and gatherings can increase our risk of being exposed. For this reason, we are asking residents in the Interior region to please follow the provincial order to allow for safer gatherings this holidays,” said Dr. Silvina Mema, Interior Health medical health officer. “I encourage everyone to take additional steps to limit the spread of COVID-19 as much as possible.”

Get Vaccinated. Book your booster dose as soon as you are eligible and invited to book an appointment at a clinic or pharmacy. Vaccines are available to everyone five and older.

Stay home if you are feeling unwell. Don't risk spreading any infection to others. Postpone plans to get together with others and limit your contacts as much as possible while you're sick.

Get tested. Testing sites are experiencing increased demand for testing and more appointments are being added regularly. Use the [BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#) to determine if you need a test for COVID-19. Stay isolated if you have symptoms while you wait for your test result.

Be vigilant. As COVID-19 case activity increases, pay attention to your health and the health of your children.

Mask up. Wear a mask over your nose and mouth in indoor public settings and situations where physical distancing isn't possible.

Keep your personal gatherings small and to people who are fully vaccinated. Keep household gatherings to the same 10 guests or one other household. Provide enough space to avoid crowding inside and open a window every hour to allow for circulation to reduce the risk.

Gather outdoors rather than indoors. Outdoor activities like hiking, snowshoeing, or gathering around a fire are a safer option to gathering indoors.

Minimize non-essential travel. Stay close to home to help prevent the virus spreading to other communities. Do not travel if you are not vaccinated.

For the latest public health orders and public guidance, visit: <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/info/restrictions>

For a list of all Interior Health COVID-19 immunization clinics and other resources visit: <https://www.interiorhealth.ca/health-and-wellness/disease-outbreaks/covid-19/immunization-clinics>