



# Bay Seniors NEWSLETTER



## IN THIS EDITION

How to protect yourself and your family

Your questions about the virus answered

Bay Area medical and social events affected

Taking care of our community

## Covid-19: what you need to know to keep yourself, your family and community safe

For everyone, but especially for seniors and people with underlying health issues, the next few months are going to be challenging.

Preventing the spread of the Covid-19 virus is a priority for all of us. There is currently no vaccine to prevent it and there is no cure.

But once it gets a hold, as we have seen around the world, it spreads fast and has dangerous consequences for older and immunocompromised people, especially those with heart, respiratory or diabetic conditions.

So we need to do everything possible to prevent the spread. Increasingly the advice is to stay home as much as possible, even if you are not self-isolating because of a recent trip or contact with someone who may

An infographic from the CDC titled 'CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)'. It features a blue background with a white hand being washed under a faucet. A yellow callout box contains the text: 'You can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses with these actions:'. Below this, a dark blue box lists three actions: 'Avoid close contact with people who are sick.', 'Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth.', and 'Wash hands often with soap & water for at least 20 seconds.' The CDC logo is in the bottom left, and the website 'www.cdc.gov/COVID19' is in the bottom right.

**COVID 19**  
CORONAVIRUS DISEASE

### CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 (COVID-19)

You can help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses with these actions:

- Avoid close contact with people who are sick.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose & mouth.
- Wash hands often with soap & water for at least 20 seconds.

CDC

[www.cdc.gov/COVID19](http://www.cdc.gov/COVID19)

have the virus.

In this special edition of our Newsletter, we are sharing as much information as is available right now about:

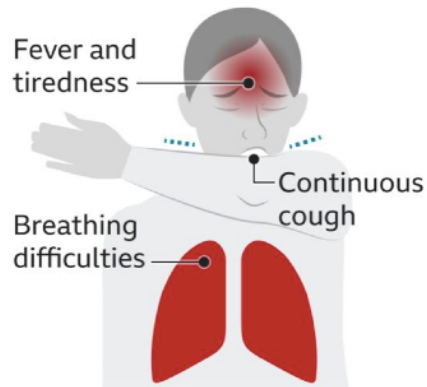
- How to protect yourself
- How to self-isolate
- When and how to get tested
- How to support your community
- What's closed or changed in our community

**Preparation** is going to be a big part of getting through this. Here are some steps everyone should be taking, right now:

- Make a plan for dealing with this
- Fill your prescriptions
- Stock up on essentials but avoid panic buying
- Know how to care for those who are ill
- Get reliable information
- Communicate with family, friends and neighbours

Here's a link to the most important ways you can protect yourself and your family: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/being-prepared.html>

# What are the symptoms



**If you have a new continuous cough or high temperature you should stay at home for seven days**

NHS/BBC

The virus infects the lungs. The symptoms start with a fever followed by a dry cough, which can lead to breathing problems.

It takes five days on average to start showing the symptoms, scientists have said, but some people will get symptoms much later than this.

The incubation period lasts up to 14 days.

# What is social distancing?

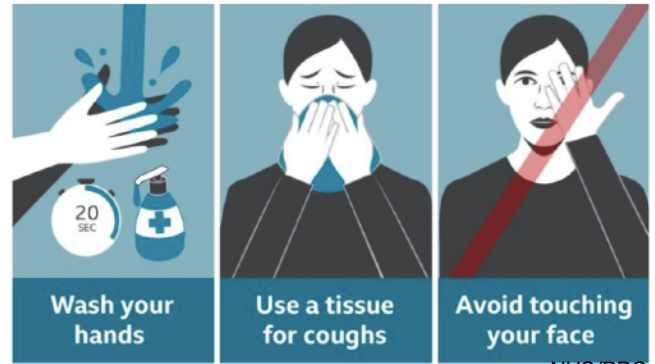
The Province is asking that public gatherings be limited to no more than 50 people.

But avoiding any crowds is one way of reducing your risk:

- avoid close contact with other people – stay about 2 metres (6 feet) apart
- avoid gatherings like parties, weddings, sports events and other group activities
- go shopping and take public transportation in off-peak hours
- greet one another with a wave or elbow bump instead of a handshake, hug, or kiss
- stay home if you're sick, especially if you have a fever or a new cough

Keep a safe space around you. The idea is to prevent you contracting the virus from the airborne droplets released when an infected person coughs.

# How do I protect myself?



NHS/BBC

The best thing is regular and thorough hand washing, preferably with soap and water.

Coronavirus spreads when an infected person coughs small droplets - packed with the virus - into the air. These can be breathed in, or cause an infection if you touch a surface they have landed on and then touch your eyes, nose or mouth.

So, coughing and sneezing into tissues, not touching your face with unwashed hands, and avoiding close contact with infected people are important for limiting the spread.

Face masks may not provide total protection, but can reduce the spread of the virus.

# If you need to self-isolate

- Do not leave home unless absolutely necessary, such as to seek medical care
- Do not go to school, work, other public areas or use public transportation or taxis
- Arrange to have groceries and supplies dropped off at your door to minimize contact
- Stay in a separate room and use a separate bathroom from others in your home, if possible
- If you have to be in contact with others, keep at least 2 metres between yourself and the other person. Keep interactions brief and wear a mask
- Avoid contact with individuals with chronic conditions, compromised immune systems and older adults.
- Avoid contact with pets if you live with other people that may also be touching the pet.

# Closures and changes that may affect you

## How your medical appointments and services may be disrupted

Many Nova Scotia Health Authority services are being reduced or suspended until further notice as part of the effort to contain the spread of COVID-19.

Effective Wednesday, March 18:

**All elective outpatient visits are cancelled.** Individual services will contact patients whose appointments are proceeding. Dialysis, chemotherapy and radiation treatments, and mental health and addictions appointments will continue.

**All non-urgent diagnostic imaging appointments** will be rescheduled and walk-in x-ray services will be closed.

**All same-day admission and elective surgical procedures** are postponed. Cancer and urgent/emergency procedures will continue.

**Out-patient blood collection services** will not close completely but services will be reduced (i.e. reduction in hours and number of locations).

## Changes at Tantallon Walk In Clinic

A message on their web site says effective immediately their strict policy will be to provide patients with a booked appointment time following a rapid screening process. Patients are to call the front desk at 902-826-7200 on arrival at the parking lot. The waiting room will accommodate a maximum of 4 patients.

**Grocery Bus Service** - suspended

## St Margaret's Centre

The centre, with the arenas, gym and fitness facilities, is closed until further notice. (All municipally owned recreation facilities, community centres and arenas have been closed).

**Library Services** - all branches of Halifax Public Libraries will be closed for three weeks.

### Tax clinics

All income tax appointments at the Library are cancelled.

**Bay Treasure Chest** - suspended. Chests will be stored in a secure manner.

## Seniors Association Events:

- March monthly meeting cancelled and fraud presentation postponed, date to be announced
- AGM postponed, new date to be announced
- All fitness classes and Tai Chi suspended until further notice
- Bay Expo 2020 cancelled

## Other impacts

**Long-term care facilities** are closed to all visitors.

**Public schools** will be closed for two weeks following March Break (weeks of March 23 and March 30).

**All licensed childcare providers** are required to close March 17 through April 3.

## Taking care of our community

Bay Seniors is hearing from area businesses and residents who are volunteering to help our members, by offering phone ordering and delivery for food, medications and household needs.

Details are being worked out, and you'll receive an email about the service in the next day or two.

In the meantime, if you need help, please contact us at [neighbours@bayseniors.ca](mailto:neighbours@bayseniors.ca).

We are all going to have to come to terms with restrictions on our freedom of movement and assembly, and this will likely last a long time.

Let's take care of your community. Take the time to check on friends and neighbours. If they are vulnerable they may appreciate a hand with getting groceries or medications.

## Stay in touch

We're going to have to spend a lot of time on our own. But that doesn't mean we have to be isolated.

Stay in touch with your community and friends on our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/bayseniors/>

## What to do if you think you may have contracted Covid-19

Anyone who has travelled outside Canada must self-isolate for 14 days upon return, even if symptom-free. This means staying home, away from the public.

If you develop a fever, with a temperature 38°C or higher, or a

cough, you should call 811 for assessment.

If you need in-person assessment, 811 will refer you to an assessment centre. Don't go to a COVID-19 assessment centre unless 811 referred you.

To help you better understand if you need to talk to 811, there's a simple questionnaire at <https://when-to-call-about-covid19.novascotia.ca/en>

## Your questions answered

### **Why are people freaking out about Covid-19 more than flu?**

Because it affects three times as many people, there is no vaccine, and it may overwhelm the medical system.

### **How quickly will it spread?**

Fast. Known cases seem to be doubling every few days.

### **When will there be a vaccine?**

Vaccines are being developed but have to be tested and are not likely to be ready before early next year.

### **When will things be back to normal?**

Expect serious impact until at least the end of June.

### **I'm going stir-crazy at home.**

Get outside. Take the dog for a walk. Just don't get too close to other people.

## Health authority patient restrictions

NSHA is limiting visitors to prevent the spread of any respiratory illness, including COVID-19.

In NSHA facilities a patient can name up to two people who will be their family or primary support person/people. The person(s) chosen as family/primary support person may change over time as specified by the patient.

Visitation will be limited to those individuals.

People who are sick or who live with someone who is sick should not visit patients.

Anyone visiting a patient should always wash or sanitize their hands before and after their visit.

*Established in 2009, the Seniors Association of St. Margaret's Bay (Bay Seniors) is a not-for-profit registered society whose purpose is to promote and participate in the development of wellness living for seniors; to research and represent the interests of seniors living in the greater St. Margaret's Bay area; and to provide housing and accommodation options for seniors. For more information about any of the topics in this newsletter, visit our website [www.bayseniors.ca](http://www.bayseniors.ca) or contact the Seniors Information Centre: email [centre@bayseniors.ca](mailto:centre@bayseniors.ca) telephone 902-820-3334. The centre is located at Unit 1 – 5229 St. Margaret's Bay Road, Upper Tantallon, NS, B3Z 4R5. It's open 10 - 2 on Tuesdays and Thursdays.*