

OCFP Calls for Continued Efforts to Protect Ontarians Against COVID-19

April 1, 2022

The Ontario College of Family Physicians (OCFP) recognizes the worrying rise in BA.2 sub-variant cases of COVID-19 in Ontario. Wastewater testing has provided evidence that the spread of this variant is likely far more widespread in the community than current levels of testing are able to detect.

As a result, we recommend that masking continue in healthcare settings (including community practices) and congregate living spaces beyond April 27, when current plans are for the mask mandate to end.

Masking in indoor public spaces, especially in crowded areas and when physical distancing is not possible, must continue to be guided by epidemiologic data. While Ontario's mask mandate in most settings was lifted on March 21, we believe it is responsible for Ontarians to be advised of the ongoing, significant risks, particularly for people who are immunocompromised, older adults, and other members of the community who live with an increased likelihood of adverse health outcomes if exposed to COVID-19.

Vaccines remain the best protection available to Ontarians for preventing hospitalization and long-term effects from COVID-19. The OCFP continues to encourage all Ontarians to get their third dose of an approved COVID-19 vaccine and, for those eligible, their fourth dose. We also stand ready to support distribution of second booster shots to more Ontarians, following the guidance expected soon from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization.

Most people who get COVID-19 can recover at home without treatment. Ontarians with COVID-19 who are at higher risk of getting seriously ill from the virus should contact their family doctor right away to discuss available COVID-19 treatments. Or, if you do not have a family doctor, go to a COVID Clinical Assessment Centre near you: <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/assessment-centre-locations>. Timely treatment is crucial for those who need it, and we call on the province to increase efforts to raise public awareness of available treatment options.

The OCFP has co-created the [Confused About COVID?](#) series to help answer Ontarians' questions and concerns.

About the Ontario College of Family Physicians

The Ontario College of Family Physicians represents more than 15,000 family physicians across the province. We support our members by providing evidence-based education and professional development, promoting and recognizing leadership excellence in family medicine, and advocating for the vital role family physicians play in delivering the highest-quality care to patients and families across Ontario. A not-for-profit and voluntary organization, the OCFP was established in 1954 and is the provincial chapter of the College of Family Physicians of Canada. (ontariofamilyphysicians.ca)

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