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KAHNAWÀ:KE'S ONLY HEALTH AND WELLNESS NEWSLETTER

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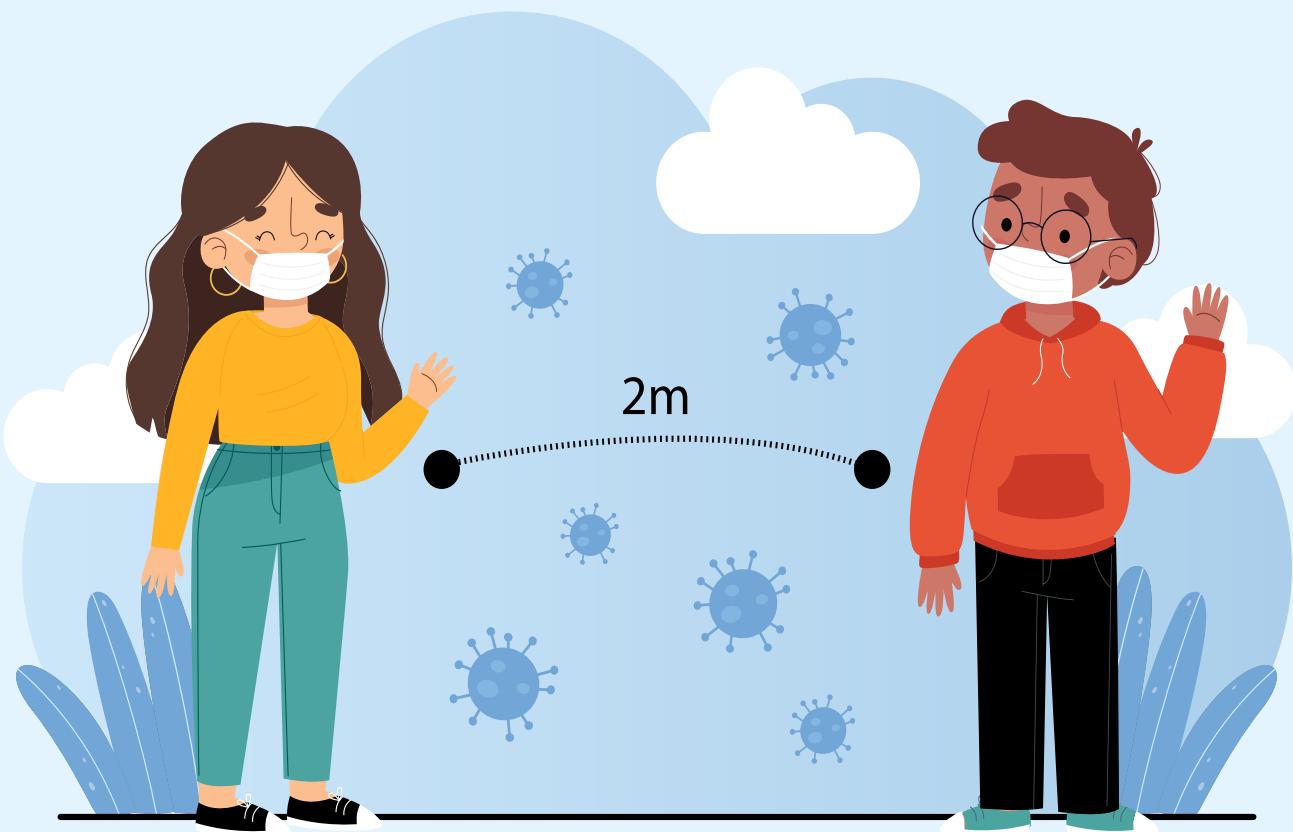
AIONKWATAKARI:TEKE

(A-YOUN-GWA-DA-GA-RI-DE-GEH)

"FOR US TO BE HEALTHY"



SPECIAL COVID-19 ISSUE



Aionkwatakari:teke

Aionkwatakari:teke is a newsletter published six times a year by Communications Services of Kahnawà:ke Shakotia'takehnhas Community Services (kscs). Our purpose is to provide information on health and wellness issues that affect Kahnawa'kehró:non. All community members are welcomed and encouraged to submit articles provided that they are comprehensive to the general public, informative and educational. Slanderous material will not be accepted. Views expressed in the articles may not necessarily reflect those of kscs. We reserve the right to edit all articles. All questions concerning this newsletter should be directed to:

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This newsletter is intended to complement, not replace, the advice of your health care provider. Before starting any new health regimen, please see your doctor. Check out our Facebook page at [KSCS Kahnawà:ke](#).

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Please continue to follow the [Kahnawa:ke Task Force](#) for updates and recommended directives as the pandemic continues.

Check out the [Kateri Memorial Hospital Centre's](#) COVID-19 site for information on COVID-19 and the complete listing of the directives from the Task Force.

And continue to check out our [website](#) and [Facebook](#) page for updates to our programs and services.

Second Wave of COVID-19

What Now?

BY TRUDY JACOBS, PARENTING

COVID-19 HAS A STIGMA ATTACHED TO IT THAT CAN be more devastating than the disease itself. People are quick to pass judgment, make assumptions and fill in the blanks when answers are not provided. Gossiping and spreading rumours (talking without knowing the facts), pointing fingers, and appointing blame is not respectful nor compassionate for those who have been infected by COVID-19. They did not go out seeking to get sick or try to get infected. Just like the common cold or the flu, COVID-19 is highly contagious and can be found everywhere.

As parents, we struggle from day-to-day to find the right balance between family, work and finding a little time to ourselves for self-care. Now the threat of COVID-19 is knocking at our door again. A second wave of COVID-19 has begun, the number of infections is rising rapidly. What now?

It is scary knowing children and young adults are the primary population being affected by this second wave. Parents are struggling with the idea of sending their child to school because there is no other option. It's gut wrenching. Parents know extra-curricular activities like sports have beneficial impacts for physical, social and mental wellness in our children – but you doubt yourself and ask "Should I sign them up? Am I doing the right thing?"

Whatever decision we make on behalf of our children is usually done with love, in the child's best interest and what works best for our own family. No judgment, shame or blame should ever come into play when it involves our children. We do the best we can with what we are given.

Everything we do in life has consequences and risk

attached to it. COVID-19 is no different. Going to the grocery store to buy food to feed our family has risk. Taking public transit or a taxi has risk. Forgetting to hand sanitize and gathering with family and friends during COVID-19 pandemic has risks. Nobody is perfect, we have all slipped at some point during this pandemic.

Many of us may be out and about unaware we are infected because we are not showing symptoms. We are not intentionally out to make people sick. Understanding the risks is one thing, but being vigilant and wearing a mask, hand sanitizing and social distancing is the key to keeping our family and others safe, especially if we are asymptomatic (not showing symptoms).

Practice Tsi Niionkwarihò:ten. Show compassion for those who have been affected or infected by COVID-19. Respect their privacy and allow them their dignity. Take care of each other and lift the minds of those who have fallen. Ask "How can I help or support you and your family?" Be proactive rather than reactive to help stem the stigmatism of being a victim of COVID-19. We are all in this fight against COVID-19 together. We each have a personal responsibility to protect each other physically and emotionally in these trying times.

As someone said to me "Let's exercise patience, understanding, compassion and love in our daily lives." Be kind to one another. We are stronger together. Tho niiowen:nake.

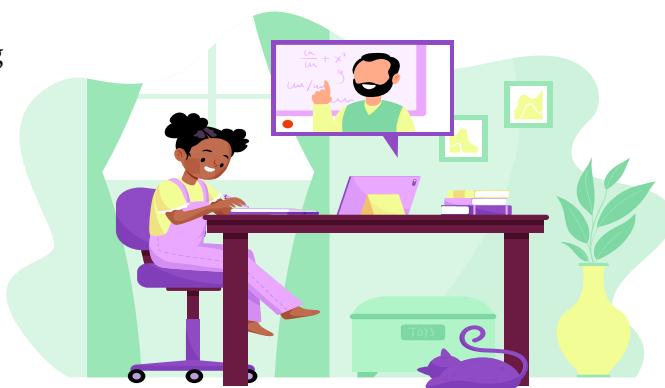
Coping Strategies for the Second Wave

BY FRANKIE MASSICOTTE, PARENTING

NOW THAT WE ARE IN THE SECOND WAVE OF THE Corona virus, families might be feeling the anxiety once again of children being home instead of in school or in daycare. They might also be worried about how they will handle all the organization of working from home and having kids at home as well. Isolation is another fear as the amount of people allowed into our social bubbles becomes more limited.

Here are some tips and information on how to be prepared for the times we are living in:

- Have all the necessary tools and materials your child(ren) may need if they need to home school. Being prepared will help if they are sent home due to illness, a positive diagnosis of the virus, or in the event of the decision to close schools. Having all the necessities will help alleviate the stress before it arises. Purchasing a laptop or tablet (if there is none in the home) is also a wise decision. Doing so now will help alleviate the struggle of purchasing one later when everyone else is doing so and they are all on back order.
- Find out what arrangements can be made with your employer ahead of time. If you are working from home or need to stay home due to a sick child, knowing what arrangements your employer is offering in these circumstances will help allay the worries about taking time off or not being paid.



- Create a space dedicated to working or schooling at home. Not everyone has a set up at home; however, preparing a dedicated area creates that separation from play or work time and family time.
- Establish a routine. Having a routine throughout the day keeps things in focus and makes it easier for parents and children to cope with the new venue. Speaking to your children about the new reality before it begins can help with your child's anxiety or if they've become scared about the changes in their routine. Eventually they will begin to get used to the new set up. Don't be too hard on them or yourself if this takes some time. Remind yourself that you are not the only one dealing with these new realities.
- Set boundaries. It's important set up "work from home" zones especially if children will also be home. It is hard to participate in a Zoom meeting with little ones climbing onto your lap or playing loudly in the background. Work should remain professional. Having a babysitter on hand is the perfect way to avoid interruptions if this reality should occur. Limit how many sitters you have coming into your home (try to use the same one if possible), establish directives from the beginning and be clear about what your expectations are regarding taking care of your child(ren). Have the sitter self-screen, discuss hand washing and cleaning of toys and areas used. Supply all the necessary cleaning tools (soap, masks

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and hand sanitizer) that will be needed. Have a backup plan should the sitter become sick or need to self-isolate. These steps can all be followed even if the child/children are being cared for by a sitter outside of the home.

- Be prepared (as much as possible). Gather all the essentials such as food, cleaning products and basic items that can empty out quickly on the store shelves. Be prepared but don't hoard. We all recall the toilet paper crisis back in March, buying now does not mean that you are worried you will never have enough, it just prepares you to not have to wait in line and with winter coming, perhaps be outside in the cold for the few items that we all need.
- Plan virtual get-togethers. With limits on how many people that can be together, organizing FaceTime/Zoom/Skype parties for both yourself and your children can help keep the feelings of isolation at bay. Kids can still have fun seeing their friends or other family members, and so will mom and dad! This can be done sharing a coffee, a meal or even a game night via the internet. Technology provides a way for people to see and hear from each other and help break the loneliness. If you do not have access to any of those platforms, remember that a phone call to lift spirits, especially for those who may be more isolated than you.

Wellness is vital during these hard times so if you can work on a plan for respite, do so. How you feel will reflect on your children and affect their behaviour as they soak up the energy around them. Depending on the age of the

child/children, you can have time to yourself by having the children keep busy with a favourite show/movie, game, toys, etc. Don't feel guilty if you are need a break. It is not necessary to spend every second with your child(ren) and a break can teach them independence. You can; however, organize your day to include individual and family time. If the children are too young, taking turns with your partner or another family member can help with this.

Remember, it's important not to disregard your children's questions or concerns, we have been living in this new reality for several months and over the summer things slowly started to return to somewhat normal. Now, with things slowly returning to the way it was at the beginning of the pandemic, children may be starting to express fear and worry.

If you are struggling with how to speak to them, a Parenting support worker from KSCS can offer suggestions. Call our Intake services at 450-632-6880 for this request. KSCS Prevention and Support workers can help with any other struggles, any worries or concerns you may be having with how to prepare for this second wave.

Lastly, keep yourself and your family safe. Mask wearing isn't fun but wearing one helps in doing our part! Handwashing and limiting unnecessary outings are also safe moves to do during this time. Having a self-screening tool that you can use with your family is important as well. There are many great resources that are shared on the KSCS website and Facebook page so check them out if you are looking for information. This is a new learning curve for many of us so do the best you can and reach out if you are having a hard time or feeling isolated.

Strengthening Your Family Plans

Blended Families, Custody Issues, and Kahnawa:ke's Second Wave

BY ALANA ATWIN, PARENTING

WITH THE SECOND WAVE OF THE COVID PANDEMIC OFFICIALLY underway, it's a good time to revise our family plans. Who is in our bubble? What precautions should we take before venturing out? And for families with blended family issues, divorce and separation, there are hard conversations that need to take place.

Back in March, during the first wave of the pandemic, Mohawk Council of Kahnawà:ke Chief, Ratsénhaienhs Ross Montour was a guest on the K103 Party Line Talk Show and the issues around custody were brought up by a listener. Ratsénhaienhs Montour expressed the need, as difficult as it may be, to put our feelings to the side and to think about the healthiest and safest situations for all families involved. "These are trying times for everyone," he stated. "We have to process our hearts to our minds. That means, we have to think first about what is best. In the situation of blended families, our hearts are going to take a beating but we have to use our minds first."

How do I (we!) decide what to do?

There is no one answer that works for every family situation, but there are questions you can ask yourself to ensure that you, your children, and the rest of your family are kept healthy.

Can I completely guarantee

- that my child(ren) can safely move from one household to the other without transmitting the virus **to the other home?**
- that my child(ren) can safely move from one household to the other without transmitting the virus **to my home?**
- that my social distancing behaviours don't put my child(ren) at risk? (Am I or the other parent required to work outside the home and are precautions being taken when parents return (disinfecting, etc)?)

There are no guarantees to these questions, so if you can, communicate with your ex-partner.

Michelle Sample, a family lawyer with Toronto-based Goldhart Law, advise ex-couples who do get along to communicate and try and come up with a plan. "Reach out to the other parent directly because hopefully the person who cares most about your children is the other parent. Identify what are the [coronavirus] risks and try to agree on that. Do we have an agreement that everyone in your house and mine is self-isolating? Maybe it's not reasonable then to continue things as normal."

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As we know, the situation can change almost daily, if not hourly. Try to open lines of communication to develop a plan. And remember, the whole reason you're having this discussion in the first place is that your best interests are in your child(ren)'s health.

What if there's a communication breakdown?

Of course, things become much more complex if there is no communication between the two households/parents. Try to keep in mind that this whole situation is stressful on everyone, children too. If they're old enough, consider asking them what they think. They may be fearful about being transported back and forth or feel guilty that they're afraid to go to the other household and may not say it. It is of utmost importance to reassure them that every decision made is to ensure that their health and safety is a priority.

How can I connect with my child?

If a decision is made to have a child remain at one household during the period of self-isolation/social distancing, there are still ways to connect with your child:

- Chat daily on Facebook Messenger. Color or draw together. Show each other what you made.
- Play a video game online together.
- If no one is showing symptoms, go for a walk or bike ride together always ensuring social distancing protocols are adhered to.
- Download Netflix Party and watch a movie together!

These are times unlike no other. We have an opportunity to help to ensure that it is a positive experience for our children, not one of added stress inside the home with everything going on in the outside world. In March, when the first wave was starting, one of the biggest fears was the unknown. Kahnawà:ke has been successful in its development of policies to ensure the health and safety of the community. If we continue following the guidelines set out, we will be successful again. Look at what worked for your family and try to apply those to this second wave. Readjust where things didn't work out so well.

Marcia Zug, professor of Family Law suggests that parents should try to be a team in this situation, even if it is difficult. "This is not the time to keep a minute accounting of how many overnights the other parent has had. Talk through concerns and be open to new arrangements. Reassure the other parent that any current reduction in their parenting time will be made up – eventually – and that in the meantime, they will have increased phone calls, video chats and other forms of non-physical contact."

Nicholas Bala, a family law professor at Queen's University states that the pandemic has been an incredibly stressful time for everyone, and that parents dealing with a fraught relationship with their ex may be feeling stressed. However, he said it's important to consider the child's best interests when dealing with custody disputes. Bala states, "Judges are explicitly saying, 'Think about your children and the long-term relationship you're both going to have.'"

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Passing the Time During COVID-19

BY MARIE DAVID,
COMMUNICATIONS

WELL. HERE WE GO AGAIN. KNOWING A SECOND WAVE OF COVID-19 was coming doesn't make it any more enjoyable or easy. And, like it or not, we may even have to brace ourselves for a third wave of COVID-19, if the history of the Spanish flu is anything to go by.

We need to brace ourselves for months and months of social distancing, staying home and in our small bubbles as much as possible, remote working and schooling, and wearing masks. If the Spanish flu provides a roadmap, the COVID-19 pandemic could last at least two years (the Spanish flu lasted from spring 1918 to spring 1920). Of course, good hand washing and coughing into your elbow should continue to be practiced regardless of a pandemic, so I personally hope people will continue to do this post-pandemic because it's just good hygiene. D'uh.

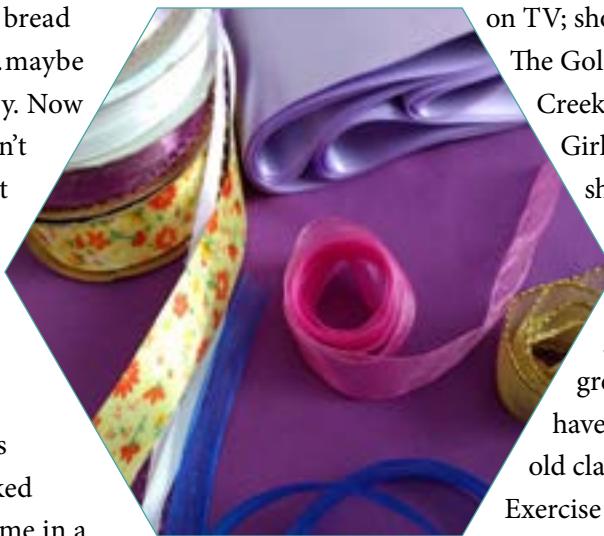
With winter coming and the likelihood of cinemas, restaurants, gyms, and other establishments remaining closed, it may be a good idea to think about how we as individuals and families can pass the time. So here, in no particular order of importance, are a few suggestions that might help. Feel free to email us any other ideas you may have at kscs@kscskahnawake.ca (attention newsletter editor).

- **BEADING:** during the spring lockdown, many people shared their beautiful creations over Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, and even Tik Tok. It's always a good time to bead, but if you're stuck at home maybe you can teach your little ones or your significant other. Or have a contest on who finishes an item faster or you can collaborate on a project. The same would go for any other craft such as quilting, sewing, basket making, woodworking etc. And hey! You can send us photos of your COVID lockdown creations and we'll publish them in our an upcoming newsletter!
- **READ:** Reading is a great way to pass the time. If you've been holding off on tackling *War and Peace* by Leo Tolstoy or *Ulysses* by James Joyce or the entire *Lord of the Rings* series by J.R.R. Tolkien, now's as good a time as any. Or how about reading more Indigenous authors like Thomas King's *An Inconvenient Indian* (a classic!) or his latest *Indians on Vacation*, or *Spread Out On the Ground* by Alicia Elliot. Make reading a family activity by turning off the TV and Internet and having each family member pop open a book to read for an hour or two.

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- **PUZZLES:** Whether your jam is crosswords, word searches or picture puzzles, doing them stimulates the brain and – when doing word puzzles – can enrich your word power. Try translating some of the words into Kanienke'ha.
- **BAKE OR COOK:** Maybe you were one of the many who took to baking their own bread during the first lockdown or...maybe you were too intimidated to try. Now you have a second chance. Don't limit yourself to bread. Try out different desserts, cakes, pies or cookies. Get the kids involved! You can also try out different cuisines, such as Mexican, Italian or French. If your fridge or freezer becomes overloaded with too many baked goods or main dishes, pack some in a container and drop it off to a neighbour, a friend, or to an elder nearby.
- **EXERCISE:** Exercise is a great way to relieve stress and help with our mental health and can also help you get a better sleep. Getting the kids involved can set them up for a lifetime of healthy habits. Lockdown may mean you're stuck at home but that doesn't mean you have to stay inside (as long as you continue to practice social distancing and mask wearing). It may be colder but going for walks, skating, snowshoeing, sliding etc., are a great way to shake those cobwebs from your head and get some fresh air.



- **DECLUTTER:** Take a page from Marie Kondo and take the opportunity to see what of your possessions "spark joy" or not.
- **MOVIE NIGHT:** Have themes e.g., romantic comedies, superheroes, adventures, musicals, dramas, horror, family friendly. Or get into retro TV shows streaming on TV; shows like Fresh Prince of Bel Aire, The Golden Girls, or recent hits like Schitt's Creek, Kim's Convenience, or Mohawk Girls. Or create your own take on a TV show like Who's Line is it Anyway? And try a family improv night.
- **GAMES:** whether it's board games or video games, they are a great way to up the family fun. If you haven't played in a while, break out the old classics like Monopoly or Sorry! Exercise your mind with Trivial Pursuits or Cards Against Humanity (more for adults). You can find several games available as apps (some you need to pay for), including Head's Up (made popular by Ellen Degeneres). Or challenge each other with popular video games like Minecraft or Super Mario.

However you choose to pass the time, I hope you and your loved ones continue to be safe and healthy. If you are struggling with parenting, addictions, or mental health issues, you can always reach out to KSCS for help at 450-632-6880. You can also find a wealth of other resources in previous newsletters or on the KSCS website or Facebook page.

Photo by Rhodi Lopez/ Unsplash

Health & Wellness Resources

What's Available at the Kahnawa:ke Library

BY REAGHAN TARBELL, STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENT COORDINATOR, KAHNAWA:KE LIBRARY

I REMEMBER WHEN I WAS 12 OR 13, ONE OF MY FAVORITE books was Letters to Judy. "Judy" was Judy Blume, author of novels for young adults, and she had compiled hundreds of letters that young children, teens and adults had written her for advice about a variety of issues: puberty, bullying, abuse, friendships, divorce, grief, body image, sex, etc. Judy read each one and replied honestly and respectfully. Letters to Judy made me feel like I wasn't alone... reading it over and over provided comfort, insight and needed humor.

It's a proven fact that reading contributes to overall health and wellness in a variety of ways: it reduces stress, lowers blood pressure and heart rate and fights depression. These are just a few benefits. Think of the last time you curled up with a good book and got lost in a different reality. During that time, there was no COVID-19, no masks, no zoom meetings, no home schooling and no uncertain future.

Even though it's a temporary reprieve, it's still a much needed one! Whether your taste runs to fiction or non-fiction, reading is good for you!

During these turbulent times, it's particularly important to take care of oneself. While no book can replace a doctor's care, there are many non-fiction books related to health and wellness that you can read to inform yourself, find solace and comfort. The Kahnawa:ke Library has a whole collection of books that fall into the health and wellness category and our collection is ever growing. During Spirit

of Wellness Month and beyond, we'll be promoting this collection to our patrons and the community through various avenues. Our intent is to let the community know that these resources exist and should you need them, many can be found at your local library.

Fortunately, and unfortunately, life goes on during COVID-19. We lose family members, or friends to disease, old age, accidents. People receive cancer or diabetes diagnosis. We also celebrate births, birthdays and various milestones. Life is beautiful and difficult at the same time. The Kahnawa:ke Library's Health and Wellness Collection includes books on childhood trauma, postpartum depres-

sion, grief, puberty, depression, healthy eating, understanding stress and addictions. We have more health-related information available in pamphlet and booklet form as well. There is sure to be something that can assist with an issue you are facing and if we don't have it, please inquire about ordering it!

The Skawenni:io Tsí

Iewennahnotahkhwa Kahnawa:ke Library is located on the Old Malone Highway, just up the road from the Kahnawa:ke Fire Brigade. We are open 6 days a week. Monday (10 A.M. to 6:30 P.M.), Tuesday to Thursday (10 A.M. to 8:30 P.M.) Friday (10 A.M. to 4 P.M.) and Sunday (1-7 P.M.). More information can be found on our [website](#). Feel free to [email](#) or call us at 450- 633-1016.



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Non-Insured Health Benefits

HEALTH CANADA

OCTOBER 2020

Pharmacy benefit information

Update on coverage of rituximab

- Rituximab is a type of medication used to treat some autoimmune conditions. Previously, the only rituximab product reimbursed by NIHB was Rituxan
- NIHB has recently listed a second rituximab product, Truxima
- Truxima was approved by Health Canada as 'biosimilar' to Rituxan, which means that these medications work in the same way and have similar effectiveness
- Adult clients with new prescriptions for a rituximab medication who meet NIHB's coverage criteria will be covered for Truxima (instead of Rituxan) for treatment of rheumatoid arthritis, granulomatosis with polyangiitis (GPA) or microscopic polyangiitis (MPA)
- Clients who are already taking Rituxan will continue to be covered for their current medication

Medical supplies and equipment (MS&E) information

- The MS&E policy guide and benefits lists have been combined so that information about eligible benefits and coverage policies can be found together
- The following MS&E coverage changes came into effect on October 7, 2020:
 - * up to \$200 of coverage is available for hearing aid accessories, every 5 years. Consult the audiology benefits list
 - * adaptive feeding cups are now covered as open benefits and listed in the self-care benefits list

Dental benefit information

New coverage for preventive dental services

- NIHB added new coverage for preventive dental services
- Topical treatments such as silver diamine fluoride are applied to damaged areas on the surface of the teeth to prevent the progression of cavities
- These are called remineralization or antimicrobial treatments, and are now covered by NIHB without predetermination:
 - * 3 times per 12 months for clients under 17 years of age
 - * once per 12 months for clients 17 and older

Going out? Do it safely.

Your actions matter.

Make informed choices to keep yourself and others safe.



Avoid



Closed spaces



Crowded places



Close contact



Always



Stay home and
away from others if
you feel sick



Follow local public
health advice



Stick to a small and
consistent social
circle

Assess the risk level

Risk levels may vary based on your ability to physically distance, the use of non-medical masks by you and others, and the controls put in place at the establishment or setting to further reduce risk. Some examples of low, medium, high risk are provided below but depend on whether or not proper public health measures are followed. Risk level for exposure is impacted by closed spaces, prolonged exposure time, crowds, forceful exhalation (yelling, singing, coughing).

Low risk



Getting mail and packages



Grocery and retail shopping with public health measures



Camping



Driving Car (solo or with household contacts)



Going for a walk



Backyard BBQ with your 'bubble' contacts



Restaurant takeout



Community / Outdoor parks and beaches



Running / hiking / biking solo or at a distance from others



Socially distanced picnic



Playing "distanced" sports outside (tennis/golf)

Medium risk



Hair salon / barbershop



Medical, health and dental appointments



Hotel / BnB



Taxi / ride shares



Working in an office



Playing on play structures



Movie theatre



Outdoor restaurant/patio



School / camp / daycare



Public pools



Malls / museums / galleries



Weddings and funerals of limited size



Visiting elderly or at-risk family / friends in their home

High risk



Bars and nightclubs



Gyms and athletic studios



Cruise ships and resorts



Hugging, kissing or shaking hands



Large religious / cultural gatherings



Watching sporting events in arenas and stadiums



Casinos



Crowded public transportation (bus, subway)



Crowded indoor restaurant / buffet



Amusement parks



High-contact sports with shared equipment (football/basketball)



Conferences



Music concerts, or places where people are singing or shouting



Sexual activity with new people



Indoor party

Continued on page 13

Understand risk factors



Help limit the spread.



Download the COVID Alert app.



For more information on COVID-19:

canada.ca/coronavirus

1-833-784-4397



Government
of Canada

Gouvernement
du Canada

Canada

Do you have questions or suggestions? Is there a topic you would like to see covered in a future issue of the newsletter? Contact us and let us know.

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