

Calgary Zone

# COVID-19 UPDATES



## More pharmacies set to offer Paxlovid

Effective Friday, April 1, more pharmacies will be able to offer Paxlovid to eligible Albertans.

Due to limited supplies, only 135 pharmacies in Alberta were initially able to order the COVID-19 treatment. Any interested pharmacy can now order the treatment. An updated list of participating pharmacies will be [available here](#) in the coming weeks.

While local Primary Care Networks continue to work on developing a strategy for Paxlovid prescribing in the Calgary area, [eligible patients](#) should continue to call the dedicated Health Link line at 1-844-343-0971. Health Link staff will ask screening questions to confirm eligibility and arrange for next steps. Paxlovid must be started within five days of the onset of COVID-19 symptoms.

More information about Paxlovid is available via [Alberta Health Services](#) and a [patient FAQ](#). A video of a presentation from the 67<sup>th</sup> Family Medicine Summit is also available [online](#).

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## COVID-19 transmission rising

Two key indicators show COVID-19 transmission is rising in the Calgary area and Alberta-wide.

Alberta Health Minister Jason Copping reported the following on Wednesday:

- The positivity rate for [PCR tests](#) increased to 24.5 per cent for the period March 22-28, up from 22 per cent the previous week
- [Wastewater rates](#) also increased in the Calgary area in the last two weeks
- About 70 per cent of all positive PCR test samples are now the BA.2 variant
- [Hospitalization rates](#) are showing small increases

[Watch the Health Minister's update.](#)

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## AHS masking requirements

AHS is asking all staff, physicians, volunteers, designated family or support people and visitors to wear a mask and physically distance at AHS, Alberta Precision Laboratories or Covenant Health facilities. Staff and

physicians are encouraged to meet virtually whenever possible and to stay home if sick and/or experiencing COVID-19 symptoms.

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta (CPSA) recently released [updated guidance](#) on masking, as well as a [poster for clinics](#) to display in their waiting rooms. The [community clinic guidance document](#) has been updated, and AHS recently republished its [PPE table for community providers](#).

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## Novavax in Alberta

Alberta is in the process of finalizing allocation and eligibility criteria for the Novavax Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine, which was recently approved by Health Canada. The vaccine is expected to be available in Alberta within weeks.

[Vaccine recommendations](#).

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## Specialist Link holiday service, PHNs

Specialist Link tele-advice services, including the COVID-19 line, will be closed on Friday, April 15, for the Easter weekend. Only selected services will be available on Monday, April 18. [More details](#).

**Personal Health Number option added:** Physicians requesting tele-advice online at [specialistlink.ca](https://specialistlink.ca) can now add the patient's Personal Health Number (PHN) to the request. Adding the PHN can help make the call quicker and more effective. [More details](#).

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## Quick links

### Resources for physicians

The Canadian Medical Association has produced a bulletin on [COVID-19 and moral distress](#), as well as a [pandemic wellness toolkit](#).