

Calgary Zone

COVID-19 UPDATES



Virtual care billing

Physicians can now submit claims for virtual visits and consultations eligible for a single complex modifier for dates of service from Saturday, January 1, 2022, onwards.

The Alberta government has updated the Claim Assessment System (CLASS) to allow for eligible claims to be submitted for HSC 03.03CV, 03.03FV and 03.08CV. The system only allows automatic processing of claims submitted within 90 days of service; payments will be made within two weeks of processing. Claims for the period Saturday, January 1 through Monday, February 14 can be submitted outside the 90-day window but require manual processing. They should be emailed to sue.penner@gov.ab.ca.

[Read the memo.](#)

Please note that claims that were submitted between Saturday, January 1 and Monday, February 14 but were partially paid due to old assessment rules can be resubmitted with an action code C; refused claims require submission of a new claim.

[Alberta Medical Association bulletin.](#)

New COVID-19 vaccine authorized

The Novavax Nuvaxovid vaccine has been cleared for use in patients aged 18 and over — the first recombinant protein subunit COVID-19 vaccine authorized in Canada.

It is an alternative option for those who have been unable or unwilling to receive an mRNA vaccine. Authorization was granted after the National Advisory Committee on Immunization [released a report](#) recommending its use.

Details have not yet been released about availability in Alberta.

Vaccine efficacy: A new graph has been released that highlights vaccine efficacy by revealing severe outcomes by vaccination status. [More details.](#)

Outpatient treatment eligibility expanded

Eligibility for Sotrovimab and Paxlovid has expanded to include patients who are unvaccinated or have only received one dose of COVID-19 vaccine and are aged 55 or older, regardless of other health conditions.

In addition, those who are 18 or older with a pre-existing health condition including diabetes, obesity, chronic kidney disease, congestive heart failure or chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, as well as pregnant and immunocompromised patients, are also eligible. [More details.](#)

When patients meet the eligibility criteria, the patient or a family member should call Health Link at 1-844-343-0971. If the patient is a resident, a primary care physician or nurse practitioner can call on their behalf. Family consent is required.

[Paxlovid FAQ.](#)

[Sotrovimab FAQ.](#)

Non-urgent blood tests

Family physicians are being asked to delay non-urgent blood testing due to a temporary shortage of disposable vials used to collect blood test samples. The shortage affects vials used for commonly ordered blood tests, including Complete Blood Count, Complete Blood Count with Differential and Hemoglobin A1C (Hgb A1C). See the [lab bulletin](#) for details.

Webinar: On Thursday, February 24 at 10 a.m., Choosing Wisely Canada is hosting a webinar on recommendations for using labs wisely. [More details.](#)

Quick links

Statement on next phase of pandemic

The Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health (CMOH) issued a statement on the next phase of the COVID-19 pandemic response. [More details.](#)

Screening and testing tool

Alberta Health Services has released a new COVID-19 screening and testing tool to support family physicians caring for patients in the community. [More details.](#)

Travel restrictions eased

Canada took steps towards easing travel restrictions this week with a series of new measures that included giving travellers the option of using a rapid antigen test result to re-enter the country. [More details.](#)