# primary cares

News & updates from the Calgary Zone

PrimaryCare
Networks
CALGARY AND AREA

## COVID-19 testing changes

Effective Monday, July 18, the most responsible provider must provide a laboratory requisition for eligible patients to receive a molecular COVID-19 test at Alberta Health Service assessment centres and swabbing sites.

Health-care workers, workers in specific high-risk settings and people who work or live in First Nation, Inuit or Métis communities can still self-book testing without a lab requisition.

Process to submit a molecular COVID-19 test lab requisition:

- **Assess**: Determine if a molecular test is required during an appointment. You can reference the new *Viral Respiratory Testing Advice for Primary Care Providers* resource from AHS for guidance.
- **Submit requisition**: If testing is indicated, fax a lab requisition to the central Health Link intake office at 403-943-6700 before the appointment is complete; this ensures the AHS site receives the requisition before the patient testing appointment.
- **Booking appointment**: Clinic teams can help the patient book the testing appointment through the online booking tool; however, it is the patient's responsibility to book the test.

If a patient cannot get an appointment with their primary care provider, or the AHS site does not have a requisition, Health Link (811) will refer the patient to the Outpatient COVID-19 Treatment Program.

Test results:

- **Primary care providers**: Results are available in Netcare, and Alberta Precision Laboratories will still send reports based on a provider's indicated preference.
- **Patients**: AHS will text, autodial or call patients with positive or negative results, which are also added to MyHealth records.
- **Indeterminate or invalid results**: AHS will arrange a repeat swab and book an appointment using the original lab requisition.

Testing is primarily to guide clinical management. For patients ineligible for molecular testing, Rapid Antigen Tests are acceptable for diagnosis and treatment in most cases (map of pharmacies with the tests). You can also order RATs at no cost through AHS.

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Physician/provider information:
ahs.ca/covidphc

Patient information:
ahs.ca/covid | alberta.ca/covid19

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# Updated COVID-19 adult pathway, FAQ, visitation

The Provincial Primary Care COVID-19 Adult Pathway was updated to focus on treatment options in primary care and post-COVID-19 due to increased vaccine uptake, reduced severity of illness and availability of RATs and COVID-19 treatments. Download the pathway.

There is also a single, comprehensive COVID-19 FAQ document for community physicians that replaces the former IPC and patient care and testing FAQs.

Effective July 13, AHS implemented updated visitation and family presence policies, rescinding several COVID-19 access restrictions. Details are in the memo, FAQ and related web page.

The updates to the adult pathway:
- Added expanded details to Paxlovid exclusion criteria, false RAT test results, medication to prevent COVID-19, monitoring and safety net flags.
- Replaced the post-COVID-19 resources with a link to the AHS COVID-19 recovery and rehabilitation web page.
- Shifted information about assessment, risk stratification, monitoring frequency, and red flag support to the expanded details section.

# Evusheld criteria expanded

AHS expanded the eligibility criteria for Evusheld for the prevention of COVID-19 in highly immunocompromised patients.

Newly eligible groups, regardless of vaccination status:
- Moderate or severe immunodeficiency conditions such as CVID, SADs and XLA
- Secondary immunodeficiency due to treatment with a B-cell depleting therapy
- Secondary hypogammaglobulinemia (IgG less than 5g/L) with a history of recurrent infections
- Unable to take vaccination due to a documented allergy or anaphylactic reaction to the COVID-19 vaccination

Consult the AHS memo or the Evusheld FAQ for health-care providers for full details.

# Changes to Maternal Fetal Medicine reports

Following the May Connect Care launch, the Maternal Family Medicine (MFM) text-only reports sent by MFM clinics in Calgary and Edmonton do not, currently, provide all measurements and assessments (read the full details).

Critical results are communicated to referring providers by phone and a fax of the full report.

The full PDF report is available in Netcare and contains all ultrasound measurements, anatomical assessments and graphs.

In response to concerns, this matter is being assessed with high priority. Updates will be posted to the AHS [delivery of results](#) web page.

## CPSA guidance FAQ

The College of Physicians and Surgeons of Alberta has posted an [FAQ](#) to address questions arising from their updated [COVID-19 guidance](#) for community clinics.

The [FAQ](#) provides guidance in response to four common questions:
- Can I require patients to wear a mask in my clinic?
- What do I need to consider when I have a higher-risk patient seeking care?
- What do I do if a patient declines all the alternative options presented to them?
- What happens if a patient is unhappy or becomes abusive?

Review the [FAQ](#).

## Quick links

**University of Calgary seminars on obstetrical management**
The Cumming School of Medicine is offering online seminars on obstetrical management, geared to a variety of obstetrical care providers. Seminars include:

1. *Rural Obstetrical Management* on Thursday, October 20 from 5 to 9 p.m. on managing obstetrical cases specific to rural practices. [Details and registration](#).
2. *Current Obstetrical Management* on Friday, October 21 from 8 a.m. to 4:20 p.m. on a range of issues in normal and abnormal cases. [Details and registration](#).

**Calgary Zone Physician Champion opportunity**
The Alberta Medical Association – Accelerating Change Transformation Team is accepting applications for a Calgary Zone Physician Champion, a contract role. Review the [job posting](#) and apply before Friday, July 29 if interested.

**Moderna for children under six**
Health Canada [authorized](#) the use of the Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine in children aged six months to five years old on July 14.

**Monkeypox webinar recording**
A [recording](#) of AMA's webinar on monkeypox in Alberta from June 29 is now online. Member login is required, but non-members can contact [webinar@alberta.org](mailto:webinar@alberta.org).

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