



**May 5, 2021 – Vaccines for Kids & Pregnant Women with Cases Falling**

Health Canada and Dr. Supriya Sharma announced today the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine is now safe to give to children ages 12 and up after initially authorizing it for use in individuals 16 years of age and older. ImmunizeBC is currently working with all regional health authorities to update immunization plans based on earlier than expected mass immunization of older children and teens. Canada is the first country in the world to sign off on giving vaccinations to these younger age groups. In the Island Health region we experienced relatively low transmission of disease in children and teens in the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> COVID-19 waves; however, that trend is changing and we are seeing more transmission of the variants between children and adults.

Island Health Total Vaccines Administered To Date	% Population Immunized - 1st Dose To Date
<b>328, 147</b>	<b>42.5%</b>

Dr. Bonnie Henry announced that BC will be receiving approximately one million doses of vaccine in May. This week pregnant women aged 16+ in BC were identified as a priority population for mass immunization; indeed, pregnant women share the same risk of ICU hospitalization from COVID-19 as a person 50-59 years old with COVID-19. Increasingly, people aged 40-50 who may have pre-existing respiratory issues and who may have delayed seeking medical attention early are experiencing severe outcomes at the 7-8 day mark of hospitalization. Positive cases in the Island Health region continue to fall with relatively effective adherence to public health orders and excellent momentum on vaccine rollout as supplies become available. We continue to bend the curve with a new transmission rate per case of ~0.68 which is comparatively excellent in the province (all authorities are now below 1.0), and average cases per day are down 13% from last week with ~25 cases per day and 10 COVID-19 positive patients currently in wards or ICU. Over 90% of our 80+ population is fully immunized, and about 7% of the regions positive cases are coming from travel abroad, with ~17-19% currently untraceable.

**WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW**

**[Recommended PPE during COVID-19 Pandemic](#)**

The **NEW** Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) recommendation in this guide is the combined guidance from the BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC)/BC Ministry of Health (see: [Personal Protective Equipment](#) and [COVID-19: Emergency Prioritization in a Pandemic Personal Protective Equipment \(PPE\) Allocation Framework](#)), and Island Health’s Infection Prevention and Control principles of best practice, developed in collaboration with Professional Practice, Clinical Operations, Occupational Health and Safety, and Medical Affairs.

## Vaccine-related Thrombocytopenia with Thrombosis Syndrome

Dr. Bonnie Henry notes no cases of vaccine-related thrombocytopenia with thrombosis syndrome (TTS) have been identified in Island Health, although this rare syndrome has been reported elsewhere following administration of COVID-19 virus vector vaccines (AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD and Janssen/Johnson & Johnson).

- Estimated incidence is between 1 in 100,000 to 1 in one million recipients of these vaccines.
- ~17,000 doses of AZ/COVISHIELD have been administered within Island Health.
- [Guidance from Ontario](#) can be used for identification and management.
- All suspected cases must be reported as per [guidance on adverse event following immunization \(AEFI\)](#).

BC COVID-19 Therapeutics Committee & Medical Director of the Thrombosis Program have shared [additional context, medical guidance, and recommendations for treatment of TTS](#).

## [BCCDC Guidance for Primary Care Management of Adult Outpatients with Suspected/Confirmed COVID-19](#)

This BCCDC guidance document provides recommendations to primary care practitioners (family physicians and nurse practitioners) for the assessment and management of adult patients with symptoms suggestive of COVID-19, suspected COVID-19, or confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19.

## [BCCDC Infection Prevention and Control Guidance for Community-based Care](#)

This document provides a practical guide for community-based physicians, nursing professionals, midwives and related staff in clinics to support appropriate office-based infection prevention and control practices for COVID-19.

## [BCCDC COVID-19 Immunization Communications Toolkit](#)

A comprehensive COVID-19 immunization communications toolkit developed by the BCCDC and Immunize BC. Contains strategies, tactics and tools for directly addressing vaccine hesitancy.



## [Referral Only COVID-19 Assessment Clinics](#)

Referral-only clinics are for physical examination of people who have COVID-19-like symptoms. Physicians and nurse practitioners can refer *AFTER* a virtual assessment has determined the patient requires an in-person examination to guide care.

- Assessment Clinics have been established in locations across Island Health and many are co-located with Testing Sites. Physicians and nurse practitioners can refer a patient by [faxing the referral](#) form directly to their local clinic. The patient will be contacted by Island Health to schedule an appointment at the Assessment Clinic.

## [Providing Safe Virtual and In-Person Care amid the Pandemic](#)

Choosing the appropriate approach to the delivery of care can be particularly challenging during the COVID-19 pandemic. Physicians continue to have questions about how best to deliver care that enhances the safety of both patient and healthcare provider. The Canadian Medical Protective Association shares the main considerations for

determining whether a virtual assessment, an in-person assessment, or a hybrid of the two is best for individual patients and their particular care needs.

### [Doctors of BC Recommendations for Expanding In-person Care in Community-based Physician Practices](#)

Dr. Bonnie Henry and Dr. Heidi Oetter have emphasized the need to use clinical judgement: in areas such as testing, deciding to see a patient in-person or virtually, or determining what type of Personal Protective Equipment we feel it is appropriate to use. The purpose of this document is to help you think through, plan, and implement the provincial guidance that supports you in the expansion of in-person in-office care.

### [Post COVID-19 Care & Recovery Advice from the Provincial Health Services Authority](#)

Helpful fact sheets and links to external websites and other material that may support your understanding and management of COVID-19 patient recovery.

### [Island Health Primary Care Grand Rounds](#)

Dementia Management: Medication & More - Dr. Marilyn Malone

Why not make things interesting and [ask a question?](#)

#### **Objectives:**

- Know when to start, stop, or switch cholinesterase inhibitors and/or memantine
- Understand risks and benefits of other medications and their non-pharmacological alternatives in symptom management
- Avoid common pitfalls when evaluating treatment effectiveness



### **COVID-19 Self-Isolation Discharge Message for Contacts & Cases**

#### *Contacts Who Have Completed Self Isolation*

You can now return to physical/social-distancing measures. If you develop symptoms of COVID-19, please refer to the links below for the most up to date recommendations and call to book a COVID-19 test 1-844-901-8442 (8:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m). Continue to use cough etiquette and frequently wash your hands. Please inform anyone who has been in contact with you during these new active symptoms that they will need to monitor themselves for symptoms for 14 days. Please note: if you have been notified of a second exposure and believe you should be isolating until a later date, please disregard this message and continue to isolate.

#### *Cases Who Have Completed Self Isolation*

You can now return to physical/social-distancing measures. Continue to use cough etiquette and frequently wash your hands. Most people with COVID-19 recover within two weeks. But, some people with more severe symptoms can take twelve weeks or more to feel better. Connect with your health care provider with any health concerns and use the links below for more information.

## LINKS, RESOURCES & FAQs

### BCCDC Resources:

- [New Today](#): This section of the website highlights the latest guidance documents and updates to the website for health professionals.
- [About the vaccines](#)
- [Resources for Health Professionals](#)
- [Reporting adverse events](#)

### Doctors of BC:

- [Info for doctors getting or giving the vaccine](#)
- [Updated toolkit for doctors' offices](#)
- <https://www.doctorsofbc.ca/news/cev-attestation-form-available-doctors>

### Frequently Asked Questions:

- [ImmunizeBC FAQ](#)