

For Immediate Release | December 15, 2020

Interior Health reporting Big White COVID-19 community cluster

KELOWNA – Interior Health has identified a COVID-19 cluster linked to Big White Mountain.

Our investigation reveals 60 cases of COVID-19 related to Big White; mostly from transmission related to shared housing. All identified cases are required to self-isolate and public health continues to follow-up directly with their close contacts with guidance and support.

Large households and social gatherings appear to be responsible for much of the COVID-19 transmission related to this cluster. This highlights the importance of limiting social activities and following COVID-19 protocols when indoors.

Everyone in the Big White community are reminded to avoid social gatherings and that socialization must be limited to immediate household bubbles. Please follow public health guidance such as physical distancing and mask wearing, even during essential activities.

Interior Health is supporting the community with outreach testing throughout the Big White community.

The risk is low for families and individuals visiting Big White who stick to their immediate household bubble and avoid socializing and gathering with people outside their immediate bubble.

We thank the community leadership at Big White for their ongoing support and collaboration, and we are confident with the safety plan in place by Big White Ski Resort Ltd. Outdoor activities at Big White are considered safe for anyone following public health direction such as physical distancing, wearing a face covering, and staying home when sick.

Interior Health will monitor this cluster for additional cases and environmental public health has been in the community to review safety plans at a number of locations and provide guidance and support as required. We would also like to remind people to limit all non-essential travel. This means, sticking to your own communities and visiting your local ski hill only.

Everyone in all communities should remain vigilant in following COVID-19 precautions:

- Keep to your household bubbles and avoid social gatherings.
- Stay home when you are sick and get tested if you have any symptoms consistent with COVID (see below).
- Practise physical distancing and use a mask if you cannot.
- Wash your hands often.

Testing by appointment only is available locally. Testing is not recommended for individuals who do not have symptoms.

Booking a test:

Online: You can book an appointment online through the COVID-19 Test Booking Form:
<https://interiorhealthcovid.secureform.ca/index.php>

By phone: Call the COVID-19 Test Booking Line at 1-877-740-7747 for assistance with booking your test. Testing is available for people with cold, influenza, or COVID-19-like symptoms, including:

- Fever
- Cough
- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Loss of sense of taste or smell
- Body aches (muscles and joints aching)
- Diarrhea
- Headache

Other milder symptoms may include: runny nose, fatigue, sore throat, vomiting and red eyes.

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