

MEDICAL HEALTH OFFICERS **ALERT**

***** This MHO alert supersedes the alert issued on February 6. *****

February 12, 2020

In this Issue:

- Update: Novel Coronavirus (COVID-19) Screening and Testing

To view previous MHO UPDATES, go to:

<https://www.interiorhealth.ca/AboutUs/Leadership/MHO/Pages/MHOUpdates.aspx>

Medical Health Officers:

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CONTACT INFO:

**Duty MHO line
(24/7)
1-866-457-5648**

Please note that the situation is evolving rapidly and the criteria for screening and testing may change. As of February 11, 2020 the novel coronavirus has been named COVID-19 by the World Health Organization.

If your patient presents with:

- Travel to the **mainland China** within 14 days of symptom onset, **OR** Contact with a case of COVID-19 within 14 days of illness onset, **AND**
- Acute respiratory illness (eg. New or worsening cough) **OR**
- Fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$

Notify the Communicable Disease (CD) Unit at 1-866-778-7736 (M-F 8:30-16:30) OR the on-call Medical Health Officer (MHO) 1-866-457-5648 (after hours and weekends)

The MHO may request that you collect the following specimens:

- A nasopharyngeal swab (red top viral transport medium); **AND**
- An oropharyngeal swab (blue top viral transport medium)

Nasopharyngeal (NP) swabs and throat swabs can be performed using contact and droplet precautions with surgical mask and eye protection, and do not require the use of an N95 respirator. N95 respirators and additional precautions should be used during aerosol-generating procedures (i.e. sputum collection).



If a symptomatic client with the above travel/contact risk factors presents to your clinic promptly provide the client a mask, place the client in a single patient room, and initiate contact and droplet precautions (including surgical mask and eye protection). After testing, please direct the client to self-isolate at home.

Guidance on infection control in your practice to mitigate the risk to other patients and staff can be found here:

<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-professionals/clinical-resources/communicable-disease-control-manual/infection-control>

Risk to Interior Health residents continues to be considered low, however we request that our colleagues in community remain vigilant for suspected cases of COVID-19

For updates on the most recent count of cases please refer to the [BC Center for Disease Control Information on Novel Coronavirus website](#) or the [World Health Organization Novel Coronavirus situation reports](#).