

COVID19 SPRING INTO ACTION

Think of COVID as one of life's many rollercoaster rides. Dr. Bonnie Henry's March 30th announcement calling for a 3 week 'circuit breaker' lockdown is definitely a low point in this ride. Variant strains are causing rapid increase in cases. We have the highest daily case count since the pandemic began. While we do not know specific variants locally, we can confirm there is an uptick in cases in the Elk Valley.

New restrictions: what we're watching

- Increased variants of concern**
Cases of faster-spreading variants are on the rise. They cause more serious illness — especially in young people.
- Indoor transmission**
Most new cases are linked to indoor social gatherings that lead to exposures in other settings.
- Vaccine impact takes time**
More people are getting vaccinated, but it will take more time before everyone is protected.
- Rapid increase of cases & hospitalization for ages 20-39**
More young people are getting the virus and it is making them sicker than before.
- Travel between communities**
People are taking the virus with them to other communities — or bringing it home.

COVID-19 IN BC

VACCINATIONS IN THE ELK VALLEY – happening now, at a rapid rate!

Vaccine roll-out is a provincially mandated process, set up in 4 stages. Currently we are in Stage 2 and quickly approaching Stage 3. Starting April 12th our offsite clinics will be opening, allowing for more vaccine appointments. Vaccines will soon be available by booking at the Elkford Community Conference Centre, Causeway Bay in Sparwood, and the Fernie Arena.

Please visit: <https://news.interiorhealth.ca/news/covid-19-vaccines/> to find information on vaccine eligibility and can find out what stage you fall under!

Today we are booking vaccines for public born 1948 or earlier, Indigenous adults age 18+, in addition to phase 1 & 2 groups. Booking for vaccines is currently done by calling **1-877-740-7747**. Both provincial and Interior Health websites will be updated frequently as criteria for booking changes.

TESTING IN THE ELK VALLEY

It is important to get tested if you are unwell, or if advised by public health. A COVID19 test can be booked online at: <https://interiorhealthcovid.secureform.ca/index.php> or call 1-877-740-7747. Our testing centre is in Sparwood, and open 7 days per week. We can now test for COVID19 by a saline gargle test for persons over the age of 4.

Shop local, order take-out, and be kind to each other.