

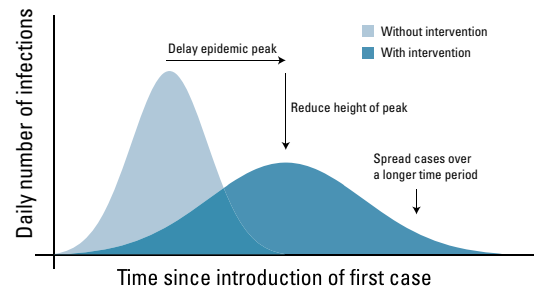


PATIENT EDUCATION TO PREVENT COVID-19

WHAT DOES “FLATTEN THE CURVE” MEAN?

“Flatten the curve” is an expression used in epidemiology to describe a graph that shows how to limit the spread of a virus. During a pandemic, a primary concern is to stop or slow the spread of the virus as much as possible. When you don’t use any public health interventions, you can expect a large number of people will get sick very quickly. This is what you see on many epidemic wave predictions such as this one — a large increase in the number of cases over a very short period of time.

This number of cases exceeds the capacity of the health-care system. But, if we use strict public health interventions — like handwashing and social distancing — we can slow the spread of the virus. Instead of many people getting sick all at once, we would see a slower increase of cases over time that can be managed by our health-care system.



HOW CAN YOU HELP?



- ▶ Wash your hands with soap and water — for at least 20 seconds!



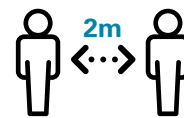
- ▶ Practise physical distancing — stay home, but if you must go out, keep a 2-metre distance from others.
- ▶ Use respiratory etiquette — cough or sneeze into your elbow.
- ▶ Clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces regularly.



- ▶ Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.
- ▶ Stay home when sick.



- ▶ When physical distancing can’t be maintained, consider wearing a non-medical mask or face-covering. This can help you from spreading infectious respiratory droplets.



WHAT IS PHYSICAL (SOCIAL) DISTANCING?

Physical distancing (formerly referred to as social distancing) means that you change your routine to minimize close contacts with others as much as possible. This means keeping at least two metres away from anyone other than the people you live with. All people in Canada are being asked to do this.

WHAT DOES SELF-ISOLATION MEAN?

Some people are being asked to self-isolate if they have symptoms of COVID-19, if they have returned from outside of Canada or if have been in contact with a suspected or confirmed COVID-19 case. Self-isolation includes the following:

- ▶ Stay at home and monitor for symptoms
- ▶ Do not have visitors
- ▶ Avoid physical contact with other people, especially people in high-risk groups



If you are self-isolating, you may need to ask a family member, friend, or neighbour for assistance or use online shopping/delivery services to access essential services. Be sure to check with your primary health-care provider and provincial/territorial health authority and municipal public health unit for direction. [Find out more about self-isolating from the Public Health Agency of Canada.](#)

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/instructions-sew-no-sew-cloth-face-covering.html>
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/publications/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/social-distancing/social-distancing-eng.pdf>
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