



Merry Christmas Chimnissing,

It's the last day before Christmas and I hope this update finds everyone well.

Testing was performed at the Health Centre yesterday with a good number of attendees. The labs are experiencing a delay to due to extraordinary high level of testing province wide. Your results may not come as quickly as before. Thank you to everyone who participated.

Our community members have been amazing and proactive in their efforts to curb the spread of COVID-19. Your individual efforts have protected us a whole against a possible outbreak.

We currently have 4 known cases of Covid-19 in our community. All families are in good health, and again thanks to their efforts; contacts outside of their households were extraordinarily low!

I would like to point out that the individuals affected were following all safety measures and careful with their chosen activities. While we do not know what variant it is, the new Omicron is highly transmissible.

Christmas can already be a very stressful time of year, let's not add additional stress or stigma to it.

Rapid tests are available on request at this time. Self monitoring should be apart of your daily routine. Medical masks are the recommended face coverings. We will provide masks on vessels and have to share, please do not rely on cloth masks at this time. The new variant is airborne and not droplet based. A 3 ply mask offers more protection.

Our crew made it home safely to the community this week. This will ease our travel with the arrival of the Waaseyagmik.

We will be taking additional safety measures on our vessels with the elimination of smoking on board. This is to remove the risk of transmission by stopping unmasking

during transit and close congregation while on board. We hope to limit the possibility of asymptomatic spread. Please be respectful of the crew while this being implemented.

We need to remember vaccinated individuals can spread COVID-19 as asymptomatic carriers. Our children are not of an age to have been fully vaccinated, we have elders and community members with severe underlying medical conditions. It cannot be stressed enough our simple actions of limited close contact, masking and washing hands or sanitizing can reduce the risk of this happening.

We have sister Nations experiencing loss due to this virus, we have to remain vigilant.

9,571 new cases reported today, 270 in Simcoe-Muskoka. It is likely to be much higher than this as testing centres and labs are being overwhelmed.

COVID-19 is a severe and acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). If at any time you are experiencing difficulty breathing; you should call 911 for EMS or call ahead to your local emergency facility: Notify the operator that you are seeking care for someone who has or may have COVID-19.

COVID-19 vaccines are all highly effective at preventing severe COVID-19 illness and death. However, vaccines are rarely 100% effective and you may still become infected with or without symptoms.

Omicon presents as a cold; some of the more commonly reported symptoms include:

- new or worsening cough
- shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- temperature equal to or more than 38°C
- feeling feverish chills
- fatigue or weakness
- muscle or body aches
- new loss of smell or taste
- headache abdominal pain, diarrhea and vomiting
- feeling very unwell
- Sore or scratchy throat
- Congestion or runny nose

You can infect others even if you don't have symptoms

You may be infected but not have symptoms. However, you can still spread the virus to others.

You may:

- develop symptoms later (be pre-symptomatic)
- never develop symptoms (be asymptomatic)

Follow the advice of your local public health authority; BFNHC on quarantine or isolation if you:

- don't have symptoms but have been exposed to someone who has or who may have COVID-19
- have tested positive

COVID-19: How to quarantine or isolate at home

<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/2019-novel-coronavirus-infection/prevention-risks/quarantine-isolate-home.html>

Please limit your contact to your immediate family household, practice all public safety measures when out, especially during extended travel.

A particular saying always comes to mind when I think of home; We are all just walking each other home. Let's do it safely and see each other through this trying time.

Stay safe and be well during this holiday season.

Emergency Operations Team