

NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release: March 6, 2020

HEALTH UNIT PREPARING FOR COVID-19

NORTH BAY, ON – As of March 5, 2020, 45 cases of COVID-19 have been confirmed in Canada, 22 in Ontario, with zero cases in the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit's (Health Unit) catchment area. The Public Health Agency of Canada has assessed the public health risk associated with COVID-19 as low for Canada.

The increasing number of cases across the country suggests that there will be more COVID-19 cases confirmed throughout Canada. As a result, local preparedness planning is important in order to minimize the impact on hospitals, to make sure that critical infrastructure continues to work and that day-to-day functions are able to be maintained.

"The Health Unit is working with community stakeholders, such as hospitals, health care providers and municipalities, to ensure that preparations are made in case the risk assessment changes," explains Dr. Chirico, Medical Officer of Health.

Simple hygiene practices can help you stay healthy:

- regular handwashing or using alcohol-based sanitizer
- not touching your face
- covering your cough or sneeze
- staying home when sick – or making plans with your employer to work from home when sick
- avoiding close contact with people who are sick

It is not recommended that individuals use masks to prevent COVID-19, as moisture can build up in the mask, which makes them not effective.

Risk in our community is low, but it is good practice for households to be prepared for any emergency, such as a power outage or an infectious disease. Having supplies on hand for shorter (under 72 hours) and longer (above 72 hours) periods of time is a good practice all the time. Examples of ways to prepare would include:

- Have a supply of easy to prepare food.
- Check your regular prescription drugs to ensure you have enough supply in your home.
- Have any nonprescription drugs and other health supplies on hand, including pain relievers, stomach remedies, cough and cold medicines, hygiene products and vitamins.
- For pets, ensure you have enough food and supplies on hand.
- Talk with family members and loved ones about how they would be cared for if they got sick, or what will be needed to care for them in your home.

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For more information on what to include in your preparedness kit visit myhealthunit.ca/emergencykits.

For more information please visit myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19.

Quick links:

- [Novel Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Ontario](#)
- [Health Canada](#)
- [Public Health Ontario](#)
- [World Health Organization](#)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention \(USA\)](#)
- [Johns Hopkins Situation Reports](#)
- [Johns Hopkins](#)
- [European Union](#)

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