

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
January 15, 2021

## Reminder: Help reduce the spread of COVID-19

**Island-wide** — With COVID-19 cases on the rise, Island Health is asking people across our region to double down on their efforts to help stop the spread of the virus. COVID-19 is in all of our communities and everyone must continue to follow the steps we know are effective in reducing the risk of transmission.

On January 8, Provincial Health Officer Dr. Bonnie Henry extended Orders on all gatherings and events to February 5, 2021, at midnight. In addition to these Orders, it is also strongly recommended that everyone limit their travel between communities and outside of the province unless it is absolutely essential for work or medical care.

Here's what we must do to keep everyone safe:

- Limit our social interactions to our immediate household. Those who live alone must limit their social interactions to one or two people in their frequent bubble. The fewer people we see, the less chance of exposure.
- Wash our hands often – an easy and effective way to prevent the spread.
- Wear a mask in all indoor public settings, including all retail stores and restaurants, except when eating or drinking.
- Limit time in public places to essential trips for things like groceries and medications.
- If you are experiencing cold, influenza, or COVID-19 symptoms, even if they are mild, please stay home, self-isolate and visit [bc.thrive.health](https://bc.thrive.health) or Island Health's [website](#) to determine if you require testing.
- Testing is fast and easy – people aged 4 and older with symptoms of COVID-19 can be tested with a gargle test or nasopharyngeal swab and results are usually available within 24 hours.

Before calling to book an appointment for testing, please use the self-assessment tool at [bc.thrive.health](https://bc.thrive.health) to determine if you or your child needs a COVID-19 test. If a test is recommended, call 1-844-901-8442 to book an appointment (daily 8:30 a.m. - 8:00 p.m.). Testing is available by appointment only.

Thank you for continuing to do your part - everything you do now will make a difference in the days and weeks to come.

For more information on COVID-19 case numbers, visit Island Health's COVID-19 [dashboard](#) or the BCCDC COVID-19 [data hub](#). You can find more information on COVID-19 at [www.islandhealth.ca/covid19](https://www.islandhealth.ca/covid19).