

Update on COVID-19
Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health
May 4, 2020 at 3:45 p.m.
Members' Lounge, Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.

- Thank you Mayor Tory. The past few months have been difficult for all of us. Today is the beginning of Mental Health Week. Our lives have been transformed since the COVID-19 pandemic and has taken a toll on many of us. Our daily routines are different and we aren't able to fully enjoy all our city has to offer on a nice sunny day like yesterday.
- I realize that with the nice weather upon us, it is getting more and more difficult to stay at home, and we need to get outside and exercise. Our mental health is equally as important as our physical health. So I will start off by thanking everyone who did not congregate in groups and practiced physical distancing when you went outside to enjoy sunshine and fresh air.
- For today's update, as of 5:00 p.m. yesterday, there were 6,278 people infected with COVID-19 in Toronto. This includes 5,641 confirmed cases and 637 probable ones. There were 387 people in hospital and 105 in intensive care units. In total, we have lost 449 Torontonians to this virus. On behalf all of us, I extend my deepest sympathies to those who have lost loved ones, and wish a speedy recovery to those who are sick.
- Every day I report these numbers to you because these data tell us how COVID-19 is affecting our city. The analysis of COVID-19 cases, hospitalizations, intensive care admissions and deaths helps us describe and understand how many people are infected in our city, how the virus continues to spread, and the burden on our local health system and health resources. It is important note that in a pandemic it is not the data from any one given day that make a difference in our understanding of what is happening, but the data patterns and trends we see occurring over time.



Public Health

- Our data is telling us that we are making positive progress in our city. It is also telling us that we continue to see new people becoming infected with this virus. This means that we are unfortunately still not in place to ease our public health measures yet.
- Prior to implementing strict public health measures in mid-March, each case of COVID-19 went on to infect an average of another 3.5 people. This contributed to the growth of the outbreak and the climb in our outbreak 'curve.'
- In the early phase of this outbreak, the number of new cases in Toronto was doubling approximately every 4 days.
- Today, the rate of infection has decreased to 1. This means that each person infected with COVID-19 is infecting one other person on average. Now we see the number of cases in Toronto is doubling every 7 days. This suggests the rate of infection in our city is slowing down and that physical distancing and self-isolation are having a positive impact.
- However, while we believe our local curve is flattening, we are not yet seeing a steady decrease in the number of new cases or new hospitalizations each day. This means we have likely not completely passed the infection peak. As is the case with any outbreak, we will only know when we have reached this point after it has occurred and our local cases begin to decrease.
- I realize this is frustrating because you have been practising physical distancing for two months now. I know it is also difficult to see other cities starting to relax restrictions, and you may be wondering why we aren't doing this yet.
- We all want to get back to enjoying our city. The reality is that COVID-19 does not impact all communities the same way. Each community must look at their own unique circumstances to inform their own approach for reopening their city safely. When our local COVID-19 infections begin to show a consistent decline, we can that start to ease our restrictions to get back to enjoying our city.



Public Health

- In closing, I want to thank you all for continuing to do your part to reduce the spread of COVID-19 by taking the public health measures we are asking you to take seriously. Please continue to stay home as much as possible, stay safe and take care of each other.

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Media contact: Lenore Bromley, Toronto Public Health, 416-338-7974,
Lenore.Bromley@toronto.ca