

Update on COVID-19
Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health
November 30, 2020 at 2 p.m.
Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.

- Thank you, Mayor Tory and good afternoon. Today I'm reporting 643 new cases of COVID-19. There are 249 people in Toronto in hospital with COVID-19 and 48 are in the ICU.
- What the numbers tell us is more important than what the numbers add up to.
- 643 is a big number – the highest I have reported to you – and it is something to think about very carefully but I also want you to think about it in context.
- First, remember that case counts fluctuate.
- Last Monday, we reported 331 confirmed case counts.
- Over the last week, case counts have fluctuated from that low of 331 up to today's 643, but generally in a range between the high 400s and the mid-500s.
- The case counts are concerning in any measure but quite variable from day-to-day.
- Second, the virus takes time to incubate and symptoms take time to emerge. The infections we're seeing lately occurred now a week, or even two weeks, ago.
- The Provincial restrictions – the grey zone designation in which Toronto operates – has only been in place for one week.
- The restrictions are in the early stages – contact between people has only just been reduced as a result of the measures.

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- And certainly we know that keeping distance is effective. We've seen the positive outcomes of distancing measures many times in many places, including right here in Toronto. Time is needed to get a full picture as the new measures take effect.
- Finally, testing also plays a part in case counts and we know that in the last couple of days there have been around 55,000 tests per day completed.
- So this is bound to capture a higher number of infections given the extent to which COVID-19 is spreading here in Toronto.
- This context brings us to what for me is the most important point: please keep your guard up.
- I hope it does not take a high number like the one we have today to make that point resonate.
- I would far rather people reflect briefly on today as one sobering number, but draw from it a renewed commitment to keeping our collective guard up.
- By making smart choices about where we go, who we see and what we do and by renewing our commitment to doing all we can do limit the spread of the virus we can prevent infections.
- Distance works.
- Masks work.
- Hand-washing works.
- Staying apart works.
- We are at lowest risk in our own homes with the people we live with every day and for the foreseeable future those are the people we should see the most: for our protection and everybody else's.



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- High case counts are in a large part under our own control. By the same token, so is getting our case counts down.
- I know there is a real awareness of what we can do on an individual basis to play our part, as I know many, many people are doing. And I'm confident that we are going to see good results if we do just that.

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