

**Update on COVID-19**  
**Dr. Eileen de Villa, Medical Officer of Health**  
**November 25, 2020 at 2 p.m.**  
**Toronto City Hall, 100 Queen St. W.**

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- Thank you, Mayor Tory, and good afternoon everyone. I want to start today with a stark indicator of COVID-19 in Toronto and the extent of the risk facing all of us.
- There is a map you'll see on screen and it shows the neighbourhoods in Toronto that meet the Provincial Red zone criteria of greater than 40 cases per 100,000 people for the week of November 8.
- In Toronto, the three neighbourhoods with the highest rates are at 514 cases per 100,000, 427 cases per 100,000 and 361 cases per 100,000 people.
- The fact is rates are alarmingly high in Toronto.
- It is fair to assume the neighbourhoods that aren't red could easily yet be, given the level for inclusion is 40 COVID-19 cases per 100,000 people.
- Today I am reporting 481 new COVID-19 cases. There are 168 people in Toronto who are in hospital with COVID-19 and 39 people in ICU.
- These numbers show there's not much to debate over the need to limit contact between us.
- You are safest with the people you live with in your home.
- After that, at these levels of infection, the risk from other people begins to rise immediately.
- So, as much as possible, we must limit contact with people we don't live with, but we don't have to eliminate it.

- As you've just heard the Mayor speak to, it's still possible to get out and be active and be safe.
- The Winter Plan provides a clear map for how to do that.
- We can definitely make the most of the outdoors this winter and I encourage you to make plans to do just that.
- But planning is essential, because in these conditions we have to consider our safety, which is not something we've ever really had to do before and certainly not with the kind of urgency that is attached to it now.
- The question of safety cannot be ignored by any of us.
- COVID-19 isn't a cold. It isn't the flu.
- It's 2020 – and despite all the knowledge and all the science and all the technology that we have at our disposal, 1,555 people in Toronto are dead because of COVID-19, as are more than 1.4 million people around the world.
- From a public health perspective, I believe a fully functioning economy is the best possible thing.
- But an economy simply cannot function fully in conditions like these.
- COVID-19 will spread wherever it can. The easier we make it, the worse it gets for people.
- The worse it gets for people, the harder the hit on the economy.
- I'm sorry COVID-19 ever emerged and I am saddened by the damage it is doing.
- But it has emerged and the truth is, right now, every person in Toronto is at risk from it.



## Public Health

- If you get it you may be spreading it for days before you know you've got it. You may never know you've got it and keep on spreading it. That's why, with infection rates so high, you've seen steps like the ones taken in the last days and weeks.
- If you get it, you can't know how it will affect you until it's too late to do anything but wait to see what happens. And even if you are willing to take the risk for yourself, no one has the right to knowingly, or negligently impose COVID-19 on anyone else. And those are the facts that I have for you today.

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