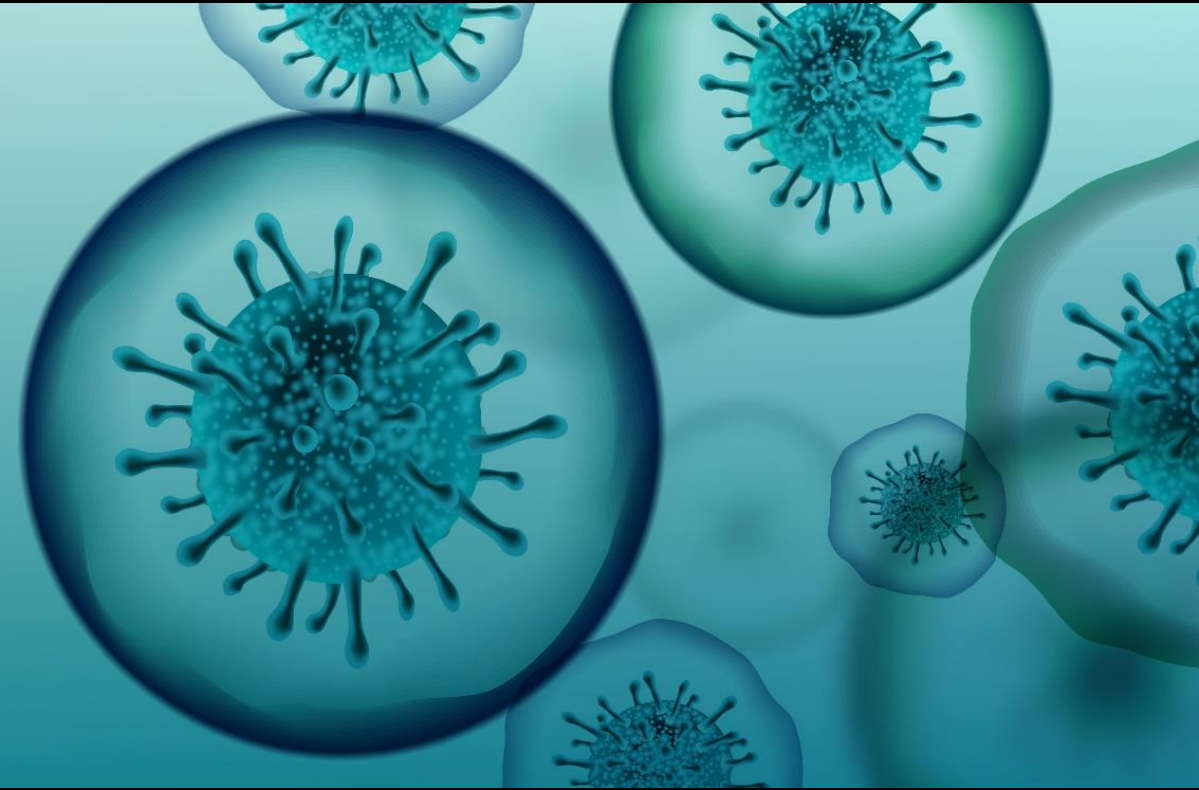




CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

Millwright Local 2309
Best Practices for Protection during
the Coronavirus Pandemic



What is a Coronavirus?

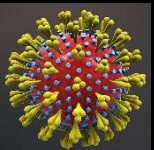
A family of viruses which, under the microscope, look vaguely “crown-shaped” (“corona” means crown in Latin)

There is a lot of variation within this virus family: some of the viruses which cause a common cold are also Coronaviruses, as are those which caused SARS. Some spread more easily than others.

The concern with the COVID19 virus is that it’s relatively contagious: without taking precautions, one infected person may be able to cause 4.08 new cases.

New mutations of the virus are evolving, and are thought to be even more infectious.

(The flu has a rate of 2-3; SARS had a rate of less than 2.75; the common cold is 6).



What is COVID-19?

“Coronavirus Disease 2019” is a more serious disease than the seasonal flu. About 0.1% of people with the flu die in North America; but mortality rate of COVID19 is about 2%.

If you are infected, the virus attaches to your own cells and destroys them.

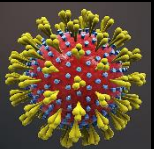
Fluids are released from the damaged cells, clogging your lungs and making it difficult for you to breathe.

Damaged cells turn into scar tissue, preventing you from getting enough oxygen through your lungs.

If your body’s organs (lungs, heart, brain, etc) are deprived of oxygen they will start to fail.

COVID19 infections can also leave permanent damage to the organs of those who survive the illness.

People who recover even from mild symptoms show lasting damage to heart tissue and remain at higher risk of stroke, blood clots, and other ongoing conditions.



How do you catch COVID19?

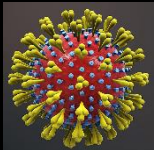
COVID-19 is spread mainly from person to person through close contact such as in a household, a workplace, or a health care setting.

If an infected person coughs, breathes, or sneezes on you, you could catch the disease.

If an infected person touches something, the virus can survive on that surface for anywhere from a couple of hours to 5 days, depending on the material.

If you touch that surface and then bring your hands to your face (nose, mouth, eyes), the virus can infect you too.

Although less common, it is also being found that you can pick up the virus as it floats through the air of a room where an infected person has recently been.



How can I know if I've caught it?

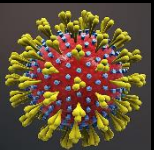
After the incubation period, you might start to develop symptoms and become ill.

Common symptoms include: fever, cough, fatigue, shortness of breath, muscle aches, headache; maybe a sore throat and runny nose, confusion, or loss of sense of taste or smell.

Some people (maybe 13% of those who catch it) might get very sick and end up with life-threatening pneumonia as their lungs fill up with fluid, making it difficult or impossible to breathe.

Some people (maybe 40%) who pick up the virus might not feel sick at all, but still test positive, meaning they're carrying the virus and can infect others.

Older people and people with pre-existing health concerns (immunity issues, respiratory issues) are most at risk of getting very sick.



Can you tell if someone you meet is infected?

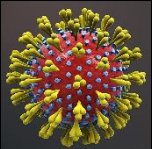
No, you can't.

Viruses have “incubation periods” after you pick it up but before it has managed to make you sick.

People with no symptoms can still spread the virus to others.

It is believed that the incubation period for the COVID19 virus is **1-14 days**.

Most people only begin to feel sick about 5 days after being exposed to the virus, but they can pass the virus on the whole time.



What should I do?

Wash hands often with soap & water for min.20 seconds, or use sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol content.
Wash hands: after touching potentially contaminated surfaces, before handling food, after using the washroom, and if you cough or sneeze.

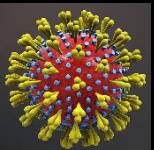
Use paper towels, rather than blowers, to dry your hands
(blowers can distribute germs over a wider area)

Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth

Clean frequently-touched surfaces with a disinfectant spray or wipe that can kill viruses

Avoid taking fever-reducing medicines like acetaminophen and ASA, since it will make it harder to notice early warning symptoms

If you feel unwell in any way, even slightly, stay home!



How do you avoid contact?

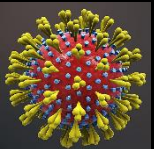
“Social Distancing”:

Limiting the time and concentration of potential virus exposures from others.

The minimum distance is 2m (6 feet).

Wearing a mask is mandatory for everyone in public spaces, to help reduce the quantity of viruses people may be exhaling. Masks with exhale valves are not acceptable.

So, spend as short a time as possible near others; stay 2m away from them, and keep washing your hands before you touch your face -- especially if you touch something that others have touched.



What if you start to feel sick?

Go home immediately

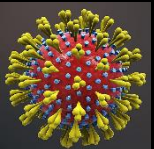
Do not use public transportation

Phone your doctor's office or Telehealth Ontario (1-866-797-0000)
for advice before considering going to a health-care facility

Keep a record of your symptoms

Stay separate from others and
keep fresh air flowing in shared rooms

Sneeze and cough into a tissue or your elbow, not your hands;
throw the tissue directly in the garbage where nobody else will be exposed to it.



What about going to work?

If you feel sick in any way, stay home. Anyone who becomes ill at work should go home immediately.

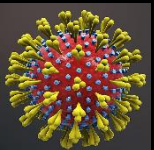
Remember to wash your hands and not touch your face

Use sanitizer if you can't access soap and water

Don't share tools or pens. If you have to touch the same things, avoid touching your face afterwards until you can wash your hands. Wipe down surfaces regularly.

Keep to the principle of "Social Distancing" wherever possible: this could include limiting how many people you deal with on the job (e.g. keep to one partner throughout the job)

Garbage disposal containers should be open, or have non-touch lids



What can employers do?

Limit size of groups working together; arrange for work to be done with proper separation between workers.

Ensure frequent cleaning of regularly-touched surfaces (door knobs, faucet handles, tables, desks)

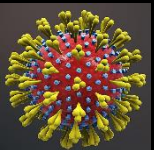
Require declarations of travel history, contacts, or symptoms before allowing site access

Enforce strict PPE use (gloves, safety glasses, face masks)

Make sanitizer and wash stations readily accessible

Keep garbage bins emptied often

Increase building ventilation rates; bring in fresh outdoor air whenever possible; install HEPA filters in the HVAC system; ensure humidity levels remain at 40% (the virus survives better in dry conditions)



What if I am concerned that attending work may constitute a risk to my health?

The following guidelines pertain to a worker's "right to refuse unsafe work":

Workers in Ontario have the right to refuse unsafe work if they believe that it may pose a danger to them or coworkers. However, cases must be assessed on an individual basis.

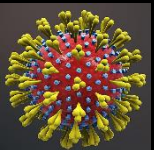
Similarly, Employers have a positive obligation to take all reasonable steps to ensure the safety of employees.

In certain workplaces where there is a higher risk of infection, greater precautions are expected.

This includes monitoring who has access to the facility, regular disinfection, proper protective equipment and constant communication and education.

We continue to recommend exercising extreme caution and assessing your case with the above guidelines in mind, and if unsafe, stop work and start the process. Safety is paramount.

If you require assistance in any capacity, including the process to refuse unsafe work, please contact us 416-757-8754.



What about “zones”?

Ontario has created five zones of public health measures:

Green: “Prevent”. Focus on awareness. Highest-risk businesses remain closed.

Yellow: “Protect”. Targeted enforcement of public health measures.

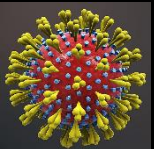
Orange: “Restrict”. Enhanced enforcement and restrictions.

Red: “Control”. Severe restrictions across multiple sectors.

Grey: Lockdown. Closures of businesses to halt transmission.

Different areas of the province may be in different zones at any given time, depending on infection rates.

On January 14, 2021, a State Of Emergency was declared, which pauses the colour coded framework.



What else can you do?

Post this information poster (or one like it) prominently throughout worksites:

<https://www.ihsa.ca/pdfs/alerts/COVID19/LTCH-03-09-2020-EN.pdf>

Here's a safety talk which can be used pre-job:

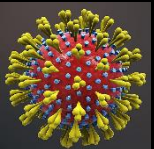
https://www.ihsa.ca/pdfs/safety_talks/prevent-the-spread-of-infectious-diseases.pdf

For more detailed information on any related topic:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/-/media/documents/ncov/ncov-daily-lit.pdf?la=en>

The Workers' Health & Safety Center has a library of documents, including workplace plans, PPE types, cleaning, ventilation, asymptomatic spread, and more:

<https://www.whsc.on.ca/Resources/Publications/COVID-19-Resources>





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