

NNIHC Clinic Guidelines for COVID-19

The following guidelines are in place to minimize the risk of COVID-19 transmission to patients and practitioners. Please adhere to these guidelines the best that you can. These guidelines will be evaluated and updated as needed based on updates from the College of Naturopaths Ontario.

To Reduce Exposure To Patients and Practitioners:

- We have a sign posted outside the clinic listing the symptoms of COVID – 19 and advising patients to return home and call the clinic if they are experiencing any of the symptoms listed.
- Please practice social distancing of 2 m at all times (unless a specific treatment is being performed eg, acupuncture).
- We have reduced the number of chairs in the reception area and waiting room to allow for social distancing.
- Patient visits will be spread out to limit the number of people in the reception area at any one time.
- All patients are expected to wash their hands at the clinic sink when they enter and when they leave the clinic.
- We ask that patients wear a mask when in common areas of the clinic (as indicated by the College of Naturopaths of Ontario guidelines). Patients are able to remove the mask once in the treatment room if they choose. If you do not have a mask, the clinic will provide you with one.
- NDs will be using Protective Personal Equipment (gloves and masks) if doing any procedure that involves touching the patient or if in close proximity to the patient.
- Plexiglass barriers have been installed at the front desk and treatment rooms desks.

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- Commonly used surfaces (counters, doors, handles, bathrooms, supplement cabinets etc.) are cleaned throughout the day. The Credit card machine and other items that patients use will be cleaned after each patient visit.
- All rooms have hand sanitizers and/or CaviWipes for practitioners to disinfect surfaces between visits.
- All patients will need to be screened when they are called to confirm their appointments as well as the day of their appointment.
- All patients will have their temperature checked prior to entering the clinic using a non-contact forehead thermometer.
- We have put up signs in both bathrooms to remind people on proper hand-washing technique.

Screening Patients

- Two days prior, as well as on the day of your appointment, your practitioner will call you to ask the following screening questions:

- 1. Did you have close contact with anyone with acute respiratory illness or have you travelled outside Ontario in the past 14 days?*
- 2. Do you have any of the following symptoms which are new or worsened, if associated with previously diagnosed allergies, chronic or pre-existing conditions, within the last 14 days?*
 - a. fever*
 - b. new onset or worsening chronic cough*
 - c. sore throat*
 - d. shortness of breath or difficulty breathing*
 - e. difficulty swallowing*
 - f. pink eye (conjunctivitis)*
 - g. myalgia or fatigue*
 - h. new olfactory or taste disorder(s)*
 - i. nausea/vomiting, diarrhea, or abdominal pain*
- 3. Have you had a confirmed exposure to someone diagnosed with COVID-19 in the past 14 days?*

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4. Have you had close contact with a person who has symptoms who has been to an impacted area but who has not been tested, has tested inconclusive, or tested negative?

5. If the patient is 70 years of age or older, are they experiencing any of the following symptoms: delirium, unexplained or increased number of falls, acute functional decline, or worsening of chronic conditions?

*If the patient answers **yes** to any of these questions and has not been tested for COVID-19, they must **not** be seen in-person and should call their local public health unit and/or telehealth (1-866-797-0000) for assessment.*

In Person Patient Visits

- Patients are encouraged/ have the option of having a telemedicine call with their ND/ practitioner. Please note, that there are specific situations when an ND will need to see a patient in-person. For example, if any aspect of a physical exam is necessary (i.e., to address symptoms associated with abdominal discomfort, to take blood pressure, etc.) or to assess muscle and joint related concerns.
- Patients are encouraged to arrive at the clinic at their **scheduled appointment time**.
- Patients are encouraged to limit the number of people that accompany them to any in-clinic visits.
- Elderly or vulnerable patients will be scheduled at a time that limits their potential exposure to other patients.
- We will be increasing the time frame between patient visits to allow time to sanitize treatment rooms and to clean all equipment used between patients and to limit patient exposure to other patients.