



Coronavirus Information

COVID-19



Geraldton District Hospital (GDH) is prepared to handle the 2019 Novel Coronavirus should any cases become present in our community.

The 2019 Novel Coronavirus, or COVID-19, is a new respiratory virus first identified in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Coronaviruses cause illness ranging from the common cold, to more serious infections like bronchitis, pneumonia, or severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS). Although it was declared a global health emergency, there have been some confirmed cases in Ontario.

Our Hospital is working closely with the Ministry of Health and Ministry of Long Term Care, and our partners implementing a robust plan to monitor for, detect and, if needed, isolate any cases of the virus.

“We have infection control policies and procedures in place and have activated additional screening procedures as an added precaution.” said the Chief Nursing Executive, Ms. Laurie Heerema at GDH.

There is no vaccine available to protect against the 2019 novel coronavirus. However, there are everyday actions that can help prevent the spread of germs that cause

respiratory illnesses. Take these everyday steps to reduce exposure to the virus and protect your health:

- Wash your hands often with soap and water or alcohol-based hand sanitizer
- Practice proper respiratory etiquette (covering your nose/mouth when coughing or sneezing)
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth
- Avoid contact with people who are ill
- Stay home if you are experiencing symptoms of respiratory illness
- Seek medical care if required and disclose any recent travel history

For more information about COVID-19, please visit

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus>.

COVID-19 – PREPARATIONS at GDH

We have been preparing for COVID-19 at the hospital. Our goal is to ensure two things:

1. That patients get the care that they need while, at the same time,
2. Protecting the health of our staff and other patients receiving care.

What you should expect:

If you are at risk for COVID-19 because of travel or contact with someone who has COVID-19, you should make an appointment at your Health Clinic. If your symptoms are mild, you will be asked to stay at home and self-isolate. If your symptoms are serious, you need to call your family doctor.

We will be working hard to protect our staff as well, so they are able to continue to care for the community; your family, your friends, and neighbours.

Please help us to do so by remaining patient with the screening questions, answering honestly, and following instructions.

You will be asked questions about your symptoms and your travel risk upon arrival in the Emergency Department in the hospital. Both the front entrance and the emergency department entrance now have someone that will assess your risk before entering the hospital. You must be seen by this assessor before you enter. They will ask you a few questions to determine if you might be a risk for the patients. Remembering that patients in hospital have compromised immune systems and we must protect them.

We expect diligent hand washing or hand sanitizing when you arrive at the hospital - -
Please thoroughly wash your hands for **20 seconds!**

If you have a fever or a cough, we expect you to put on a mask upon arrival to the hospital and ENSURE YOUR MOUTH AND NOSE ARE FULLY COVERED. LEAVE IT ON AND DO NOT REMOVE IT UNTIL YOU ARE ASKED TO DO SO. Do not assume the mask can be removed once you are admitted to the exam room!

Some additional information: all externally based meetings have now been cancelled and will be postponed. No additional personnel will be allowed into the facility, unless deemed necessary.

Visitors will be limited, only one per patient during this time of active virus spread.