

Self-Isolation (COVID-19 Update) Frequently Asked Questions

March 23, 2020, 1:35 pm

This information will be amended and adapted regularly as the situation changes.

BCDHA has put together this FAQ to support members who are trying to understand self-isolation and what that entails. If you have an additional question, please email it to info@bcdha.com labelled Self-Isolation

1) What is the difference between self-isolation, social distancing/physical distancing and isolation?

The Public Health Agency of Canada has provided resources on the differences between Self-Isolation, Social Distancing and Isolation [here](#). ALL Canadians have been instructed to practice social distancing/physical distancing. This is NOT optional and means you are required to ensure you leave six feet of space between you and anyone else when you are in a public space. (This is why dental offices are required to close, because you can't provide hygiene services from six feet away).

Click [here](#) to read useful information from the Provincial Health Officer for anyone who is in self-isolation.

2) When do I self-isolate and how?

If you have been in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19 or is exhibiting symptoms, you should self isolate. The instructions from the Office of the Provincial Health Officer and the BC CDC are:

- For the health of your family, friends and community, try to stay at home.
- Do not go to work or school.
- Do not go to public areas, including places of worship, stores, shopping malls and restaurants.
- Limit visitors to your home.
- Cancel or reschedule non-urgent appointments.
- Do not take buses, taxis or ride-sharing where you would be in contact with others.
- It is okay to have family/friends drop off food or you can use delivery/pick up services for errands such as grocery shopping.

3) How long will we have to practice social distancing?

We wish we had the answer to this, but we are still uncertain how this pandemic is going to roll out throughout Canada. We are at the very beginning of this outbreak, and if the experiences of other countries are taken into consideration, this could last for weeks or months. We know this is a very difficult concept to accept – spending weeks and months not interacting with friends and neighbours. Follow the advice of the provincial health officer and other officials. The situation is changing on an hourly basis and we will continue to update as required.

4) I was self-isolated after PDC because Dr. Henry ordered this to happen until March 22. Now that it's over can I go back to normal and back to work?

In terms of the PDC, you can go back to normal HOWEVER, you have no doubt heard the ongoing directives from Dr. Henry that ALL British Columbians must engage in social distancing. The Prime Minister has further said “go home and stay home”. [Our College has said that dental hygiene services are not essential/urgent and should be suspended immediately.](#) Any business in BC that remains open must be able to guarantee a six foot space between anyone on the premises, which eliminates the option of providing dental hygiene services. You can't really go back to normal, and you should not go back to work. You can, however, go grocery shopping as needed.

5) What if I developed symptoms during my self-isolation period?

If you developed any symptoms of COVID-19 while you were self-isolated, you should include an additional 10 days of self-isolation beginning ON THE DAY you developed symptoms. If you have one symptom (e.g., a cough), that develops while in self-isolation, you should track ten days from the cough and self-isolate (so your self-isolation may be two weeks + any additional days up until 10. If you are still coughing at the end of the ten days from symptoms, you are cleared to resume normal activity. If you develop any additional symptoms you should call 811 and request a test. Please note that normal activity today is not terribly different from self-isolation. Social/Physical distancing is still in play.

6) How many people from PDC got sick, and will there be more?

We know that at least 20 people tested positive as a result of the conference. There may well be many more cases across the country with some people being asymptomatic and others feeling 'a bit sick' but not realizing they had COVID-19. At this point, it would be very

difficult to continue to trace ripple effect from PDC. Mandatory self-isolation has ended, so anyone who tests positive from this point forward would most likely be from a community transmission

