

Columbia College Communicable Disease Prevention Plan:

Introduction

The Columbia College Communicable Disease Prevention Plan is a strategy to reduce transmission of illness on Campus. This plan is considered a living document, will be updated, and enhanced when it is appropriate based on guidance from the health authority or the Provincial Health Officer. It includes measures the College will take to provide a safe and healthy environment and procedures that staff, students, and visitors will follow.

Daily Self Check:

Everyone going into the Columbia College Campus must complete a daily health check, including staff, visitors, and students. A daily health check means checking yourself for new symptoms of illness.

Symptoms of illness are things like: • *Fever or chills* • *Difficulty breathing* • *Runny nose* • *Headache* • *Diarrhea* • *Cough* • *Sore throat* • *Sneezing* • *Body aches, or rash* • *Loss of sense of smell or taste* • *Loss of appetite* • *Extreme fatigue or tiredness* • *Nausea or vomiting*

If you are sick or feel unwell, stay at home and rest. This is important to stop the spread of illness, including COVID-19 on Campus.

If you are unsure about your symptoms or whether you should come to class,

- Use the [Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- Contact your health care provider or call 8-1-1 HealthLink BC

You can also ask a CC Nurse for advice nurses@columbiacollege.ca

Clean Environment:

Columbia College will be cleaned and disinfected in accordance with the Cleaning and Disinfectants for Public Settings and Public Health guidance. We will follow a schedule that focuses on cleaning high-traffic areas and high-contact surfaces such as doors and cabinets handle, stair railings, washrooms, shared office spaces, photocopiers, printers, cables, desks, keyboards, light switches, and communications devices.

Cleaning procedure/standards will be monitored regularly through Quality Assurance (QA) Audits, including ATP testing, and a report submitted to the Building Engineer.

The OHSEC Chair and College Engineer will conduct a monthly review to ensure the effectiveness of the plan prior to the monthly OHSEC meeting and report to the committee.

Building Ventilation: Columbia College has triple layer filtration system to ensure superior air quality. Our HRV (Heat Recovery Ventilator) uses 2 layers of high efficiency particulate filters for recirculating air in the building: a pre-filter that meets HEPA (High Efficiency Particulate Arrestor) standards and a final filter rated MERV 13 (Minimum Efficiency Reporting Value). The role of a filter is to absorb particles in the air so that these particles are not inhaled. System maintenance is performed every 4 months during semester breaks, when filters are changed.

In addition, the building ventilation system uses DDC (direct digital control) along with CO2 (Carbon dioxide) sensors that alert and automatically adjust the amount of fresh air intake and exhaust air flow according to building occupant loads.

Additional Personal Protective Measures:

Masks: Masks are one of many layers of protection we use to help prevent the spread of illness. Wearing a mask or not is a personal choice and will be respected by all staff, students, and visitors. Ear loop masks are available to staff and students at the Security Desk on the main floor, the Nursing Station and at Student Services.

Immunization: Columbia College strongly supports all community members to maintain and update routine vaccinations that protect against severe illness. In the past 50 years, vaccines have saved more lives in Canada than any other medical intervention. <https://immunizebc.ca/>

Coughing and Sneezing Etiquette: Always turn away and cough or sneeze into tissue or your sleeve and then immediately wash or sanitize your hands; Try to leave the room before coughing or sneezing.

Hand Hygiene: Hand hygiene facilities are available throughout the College. All employees and students are expected to clean their hands frequently to reduce transmission of germs.

Clean hands:

- upon arrival at the College and before leaving,
- before and after eating and drinking
- after using the bathroom
- whenever hands are visibly dirty
- before and after using a shared workspace
- when moving between different learning environments, e.g., outdoor-indoor transitions

If a sink is not available, 70% alcohol-based hand sanitizer will be provided and should be used.

Illness at Columbia College – Employees:

If an employee begins to experience new symptoms of illness during the workday at Columbia College, the employee will follow the steps below.

1. Wear a mask (available at security main floor, isolation room or Nurse's office)
2. Wash hands or use hand sanitizer.
3. Exit the premises and return home.
4. Inform their supervisor, adhering to the staff protocol for absences.
5. Seek advice from a CC Nurse, Health Care Provider or HealthLink BC. Employees who are experiencing respiratory symptoms should complete the COVID-19 assessment tool. <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en> to help determine the next steps.
6. If needed, an isolation room will be available while you wait for a ride. Call or go to Security for access **604-697-7089**.

Illness at Columbia College – Students:

If a student begins to experience new symptoms of illness during their day at a Columbia College campus, the student is to:

1. Wear a clean mask over their nose and mouth (available at security main floor, or Nurse's office)
2. Wash their hands or use hand sanitizer.
3. Exit the premises and return home.
4. If needed, an isolation room will be available while you wait for a ride. Call or go to Security for access **604-697-7089**.
5. For health guidance, email the CC Nurse at nurses@columbiacollege.ca or call HealthLink BC at 811, 24 hours a day.
6. Students who are experiencing respiratory symptoms should complete the COVID-19 assessment tool. <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en> to help determine the next steps.
7. If you require academic accommodation from your teacher complete the self-declaration form here to be referred to your Counselor:
<https://www.columbiacollege.ca/current-students/health-and-wellness/student-self-declaration/>
8. Secondary students should email nca@columbiacollege.ca include the following information:
 - Name
 - Columbia College ID number
 - phone number where you can be reached for follow up

A physician's note may be requested by the College before re-entry.

Isolation Room Protocol: Instructions for the Security Guard or First Aid Responder – Student or Staff Illness

If a student or staff member needs access to the isolation room 223 or 347, (North Campus, 406) due to illness:

1. Sanitize hands, wear a mask, don face shield, remain a safe distance from the symptomatic student/staff member.
2. Ensure the student or staff member is wearing a mask and has used hand sanitizer
3. Escort student or staff member to room (North Campus, 406) 223 or 347, the designated Isolation room(s).
4. Ask the student or staff the following information and make sure this information goes to the Nurse.
 - Date
 - Full Name/ ID Number
 - Phone number
 - Classroom number and areas of the College the individual was on that day
 - Time the individual entered the Isolation Room
 - Time Exiting the building

5. For cleaning purposes, inform Chris Liu of the room(s) and areas used within the College by the student or staff member. He will coordinate the cleaning if required.
6. Send an e-mail to the Nurse nurses@columbiacollege.ca with the above information.

Instructions for Teachers – Student Illness

1. If a student reports an illness from home:

- Instruct the student to stay home.
- Ask the student to connect with the Campus Nurse. nurses@columbiacollege.ca or contact HealthLink BC, 811
- If the student can be easily accommodated and there are no ongoing concerns for student health, no other action is required.
- Students should not be penalized for following the CC communicable disease prevention plan.
- Direct the student to complete the self-declaration form or connect with their Advisor if accommodation cannot easily be made.: <https://www.columbiacollege.ca/current-students/health-and-wellness/student-self-declaration/>

2. If a student displays symptoms of illness in class:

- Ask the student to leave the building and connect with the Nurse from home, nurses@columbiacollege.ca Do this with as little contact as possible. TEAMS message, or email is best.
- Email the Nurse to follow up with the student.
- Reassure the student they will not be penalized for leaving class due to illness.
- If the student is too sick to go home on their own, call Security: 604-697-7089 and request First Aid. Security will support the student to go to the Isolation Room or Nursing Station. **See 2.3 Isolation Room Procedure**
- In an emergency always call 911 first and CC Security second.
- Direct the student to complete the self-declaration form: <https://www.columbiacollege.ca/current-students/health-and-wellness/student-self-declaration/>

Instructions for Nurses - Student Illness:

Once a Nurse has been notified that a student is leaving the College because of illness:

1. Connect with the student to provide medical advice and community resources.
2. Assist the student in determining how long they should stay home.
3. Communicate as needed with Counsellors / Advisors about the student's absence.

How to Reach College Health Services

Nurses and Counsellors are available for online consultations with students via Email and Teams Monday – Saturday. Students can access in person drop in nursing advice in Rm 223 Monday – Saturday through the day. Health and wellness information is found on the Columbia College

website <https://www.columbiacollege.ca/current-students/health-and-wellness/>. email nurses@columbiacollege.ca Or email ssa@columbiacollege.ca to see a Counsellor.

Testing for COVID-19:

Antigen tests for COVID-19 are available from the Nursing Station Student Services or at Pharmacies in community. If you have symptoms that may be COVID-19:

Determine if you need to be tested [COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)
[When to get a COVID-19 test](#) If you feel unsure about your symptoms, contact your health care provider or call 8-1-1.

Management of Symptoms at Home:

Questions or concerns about how to manage your symptoms can be addressed by your Health Care Provider or by calling HealthLink BC ph 811 or contact a CC Nurse nurses@columbiacollege.ca

1. Before travelling to medical clinics; call ahead as there is an increased risk of viral transmission with public transportation and in the clinic waiting room.
2. Online resources for physician support are at www.medicaps.ca, www.virtualclinics.ca
3. For non-life-threatening illness or injury, contact your primary care physician or walk-in clinic for appointments.
4. For all potentially life-threatening emergencies, such as trouble breathing (lungs) or life-threatening symptoms, call 911.
5. For self- assessment of respiratory symptoms, go to <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
6. Anyone with respiratory symptoms should self- isolate.

Home Treatment of Respiratory Symptoms:

Treatment of mild to moderate cold, flu, COVID-19 illness is similar.
HealthLink BC advice, includes:

- Prevent dehydration. Hot fluids, such as tea or soup, may help relieve congestion in your nose and throat. If you have a productive cough, fluids may help thin the mucus in your lungs so your cough can clear it out.
- Get extra rest; let your symptoms be your guide. If you have a cold, you may be able to stick to your usual routine and just get some extra sleep.
- Let yourself cough if you have a cough that brings up mucus from the lungs. It can help prevent bacterial infections. People who have chronic bronchitis or emphysema need to cough to help clear mucus from their lungs.
- For a sore throat, gargle at least once each hour with warm salt water 5 g (1 tsp) of salt in 240 mL (8 fl oz) of water] to reduce swelling and discomfort. For more information, see the topic [Sore Throat and Other Throat Problems](#).
- Use a humidifier to add moisture to the air. Use only water in the humidifier.

- For a stuffy nose, use saline spray or nose drops to wash out mucus and germs.

For more information go to:

<https://www.healthlinkbc.ca/illnesses-conditions/lung-and-respiratory-conditions/respiratory-problems-age-12-and-older#hw-home-treatment>

Returning to Campus After Illness:

Return to the Columbia College campus when the following criteria has been met:

- Your symptoms have resolved for 24 hours or longer. Or your Health Care Provider has said it is safe to do so.
- If you test positive for COVID-19 – Follow the BC CDC guidance for self-isolation and safe return to community. <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/self-isolation>

Communication:

In accordance with the Provincial Health Officer, this plan has been posted on campus and the College website. If there is a known illness on campus that poses a significant threat to public health, Columbia College will follow the guidance of the appropriate health authority and enact additional measures to ensure the safety of all individuals coming to the College. Columbia College will work closely with our Medical Health Officer to communicate this issue in a way that protects the privacy of those affected.

Questions about this plan can be directed to:

Occupational Health, Safety and Emergency Committee

OccupationalHealthandSafetyCommittee@columbiacollege.ca