



### **| COVID-19 | 95% of all new COVID-19 cases identify as Omicron**

The Roy Romanow Provincial Laboratory (RRPL) is reporting that 95 per cent of all new COVID positive cases identified are the Omicron variant, based on SNP screening. Based on this percentage, it is assumed that all new COVID-19 cases going forward in the province are Omicron and the RRPL will cease performing SNP screening on new positive COVID tests on Jan. 5, 2022.

All specimens from international travelers who test positive in Saskatchewan will continue to undergo whole genome sequencing (WGS) to determine their lineage, as well as both targeted and randomly selected cases including reinfections, severe infections in people under 50 years of age, infections post-vaccination and outbreaks/clusters to a capacity of ~540/week. WGS takes three to five days to report results due to the complexity of this testing and half of this capacity is referred to the National Microbiology Lab in Winnipeg.

### **| COVID-19 | Kids talk to Docs**

Children from across Saskatchewan submitted COVID-19 vaccination questions – and our physicians answered!



This question comes from Linnea in Regina – What if my friends don't get the COVID-19 vaccine. Can I still play with them?



### **| COVID-19 | Faces of the Fight**

#### **My COVID Story: Cassandra Leggott, Nurse Practitioner**

A year ago, I was a “Faces of the Fight” for the Saskatchewan Health Authority during the second wave of COVID-19 to hit our province.

Eleven months ago, I watched an elderly man cry tears of joy as I provided him his first dose of Moderna. It was a Saturday. Our small staff of three nurses - myself included, provided 110 doses to our community's most vulnerable. We were so excited. The end was drawing near. We knew then there was a good chance we'd need boosters, that new variants would emerge and vaccinations would be needed to continually provide immunity against this smart and evolving disease.



Nine months ago, I sang and danced my way to my colleagues table to get my first Moderna shot. It was a left-over extra dose from our community’s first mass vaccine clinic. The excitement and elation was felt by all that day.

And now today. Today, my four-year-old has COVID-19. It is mild. He is healthy. Hopefully, we keep it at bay as his little two-year-old brother has asthma and has needed steroids and an emergency hospital visit for low oxygenation for a cold. He is at risk. As a mother, I am scared.

My kids have lived most of their lives in a pandemic. They have eaten supper with a mother who is attending meetings. Then they had to start eating supper, going to bed, waking up and getting ready for daycare with no mother at home as I was redeployed back to ICU to help out in the fourth wave. This redeployment changed our home life, as I went from a Monday to Friday job in a clinic to being in full personal protective equipment (PPE) for an entire shift on a Saturday and working night shifts.

COVID-19 is and has always been real in our house. We have been careful. We followed the rules. It found us.

We are all tired of COVID-19. Friendships and families are being split apart because of their differing views. We could all use some grace. I understand many are scared to get the vaccine. I understand many are scared to get COVID-19. We need to respect others viewpoints. However, some viewpoints are a threat to public safety. If you do not want to be vaccinated, that is absolutely your choice. But accept that that choice has the consequences of others maybe not wanting to spend time with you as they are scared of COVID-19. We do not need to name-call anyone on either side of the fence.

As we enter another COVID-19 Christmas, please be careful. Please be mindful. Vaccine immunity is waning. There are not many public health rules. Keep gatherings small. Do rapid tests.

Our hospital capacity is more than beds; it is staff. We are a limited resource. We are tired. We are the people who have been dealing with COVID every day at work since the beginning.

It’s been a long 20 months. And now we have years to try and catch up on other health issues due to the slow-downs and redeployment of staff to support the past waves.

I left a clinic and community of 1,100 people with no full-time primary care provider to take care of the sickest of the sick in ICU during the fourth wave. Surging for COVID takes a toll on the entire system. A system that was already at max capacity prior to the pandemic.

Stay home if you’re sick.



*Cassandra Leggott (left) and her two boys (right).*



Get tested if you have any symptoms.

Gather in small groups and with those that are vaccinated. Rapid test. Wear a mask if you are at risk of severe disease.

Get vaccinated. Whether it is dose 1, 2, or 3.

Omicron appears to be much more transmissible and is quickly becoming predominant in other provinces. So how we act over Christmas will dictate what January and February looks like.

Take care of each other. Respect thy neighbour. We need to get through this pandemic together.

May you have a safe, healthy, and very Merry Christmas.

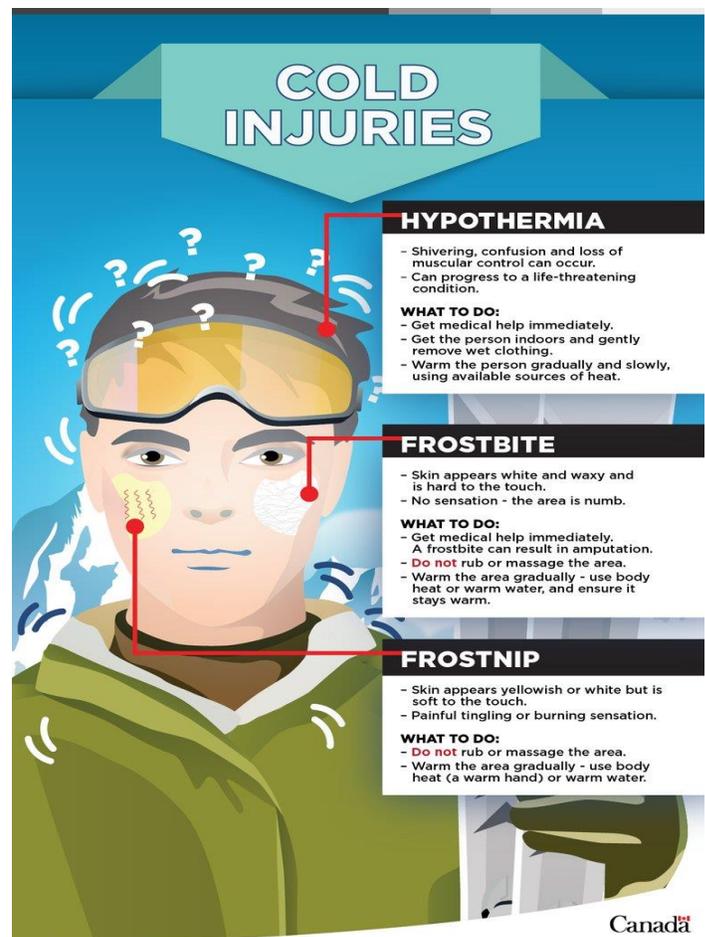
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### Know the signs of cold injuries

The extreme cold blanketing much of Saskatchewan can be very dangerous. Know the signs of cold injuries and what to do.

If heading out for a road trip, make sure to:

- travel with a fully charged phone
- have full winter clothing on or in the vehicle for every passenger including extra socks and gloves
- make sure someone knows to expect you or hear from you that you have safely arrived
- check road conditions/weather forecast before you leave
- have an emergency kit including granola bars, traction aides, blankets/sleeping bags, flashlight and extra batteries, reflective safety triangles and/or flares.





COVID-19



## Safe Family Presence

Before you visit, protect yourself and others by getting vaccinated. Being fully vaccinated and getting your booster greatly reduces the risk of contracting COVID-19.

ANTIBODIES



LOADING

[saskatchewan.ca/COVID19](https://saskatchewan.ca/COVID19)



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