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Coronavirus (COVID-19) daily update

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This Chief Health Officer update is intended to provide clinicians and the Victorian public with information about the number of confirmed cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria as well as relevant public health response activities in Victoria. Chief Health Officer Alerts will continue to be issued when there are changes to the public health advice related to coronavirus (COVID-19).

29/07/2020

What's new?

- As of 29 July 2020, the total number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in Victoria is 9,304 with 295 new cases diagnosed since yesterday.
- The overall total has increased by 255 with 40 cases being reclassified – largely due to duplication.
- Of the new cases, 34 are linked to outbreaks or complex cases and 261 are under investigation.
- There are 1,418 cases that may indicate community transmission, an increase of 55 since yesterday's report.
- 307 people are in hospital, including 41 patients in intensive care.
- Sadly, there have been 9 new deaths reported since yesterday. To date, 92 people have died from coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria.
- There are 4,839 cases currently active in Victoria. 4,123 people have recovered.
- More than 1,554,600 test results have been processed by the department since 1 January 2020.
- Further details can be found in today's [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) media release](#).

- Up-to-date [epidemiological data is available on our website](#).
- The Department of Health and Human Services will be distributing 2.1 million masks to eligible Victorians. General practices can place orders for these masks. More information is available on [the reusable face masks page](#).

Stay at Home directions

- The State of Emergency has been extended until 11:59pm on 16 August 2020, allowing for the enforcement of the Stay at Home (Restricted Areas) Direction and other vital public health directions from the Chief Health Officer.
- Stay at Home (Restricted Areas) Directions are in force across metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire.
- People who live in these areas are only allowed to go out for four reasons: shopping for food and supplies, health care and caregiving, outdoor exercise, and study or work – if unable to work or study from home.
- From 11:59pm on Wednesday 22 July 2020, people who live in metropolitan Melbourne and Mitchell Shire are required to wear a face covering when leaving home, unless a lawful exception applies. A face covering can be either a face mask or a cloth mask and needs to cover both the nose and mouth. [More information on face coverings](#) is available on our website.

Current advice to clinicians

- Practitioners should test any patients who meet the clinical criteria below

Fever OR chills in the absence of an alternative diagnosis that explains the clinical presentation*

OR

Acute respiratory infection (e.g. cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, anosmia or loss of smell or loss of taste)

Note: In addition, testing is recommended for people with new onset of other clinical symptoms consistent with coronavirus (COVID-19)** AND who are close contacts of a confirmed case of coronavirus (COVID-19); who have returned from overseas in the past 14 days; or who are healthcare or aged care workers.

**Clinical discretion applies including consideration of the potential for co-infection (e.g. concurrent infection with SARS-CoV-2 and influenza)G*

***headache, myalgia, stuffy nose, nausea, vomiting, diarrhoea*

- If referring your patients for coronavirus (COVID-19) testing, a list of testing locations can be found on the [getting tested for coronavirus page](#).
- Due to an increased risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) health care workers in Victoria (including in regional and rural areas) must wear a level 1 or type 1 disposable surgical mask in public-facing areas in healthcare settings, particularly where adequate physical distancing is not possible. For more guidance on this update see the [health services](#)

[and professionals](#) page. This requirement includes pharmacists, nurses, doctors and other Victorian health care workers.

- Any coronavirus (COVID-19) test reported by a laboratory as having detected SARS-CoV-2 on PCR will be treated as positive for the purposes of public health actions, regardless of repeat testing of the sample. It is not appropriate to advise a patient that a test is a false positive.
- If you're the doctor of a confirmed case, check in regularly on your patient – if your patient's clinical condition deteriorates, consider tertiary referral as your next step.
- Confirmed cases will be contacted by the public health team and if a person cannot be contacted after two calls within a two-hour window, the Australian Defence Force (ADF) will accompany an authorised officer to visit the person's address.

Key messages for the community

- Stay home and get tested if you have symptoms of coronavirus (COVID-19) no matter how mild: including fever, chills, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose, loss of sense of smell or taste. Go home straight after your test and self-isolate while you wait for the results. You must not go to a workplace until you get your results. [Go to the DHHS testing map for locations](#).
- **Face coverings in Melbourne and Mitchell Shire** - People living in Melbourne and Mitchell Shire are required to wear a face covering from 11:59pm on Wednesday 22 July when leaving their home, unless a lawful exception applies. The fine for not wearing a face covering will be \$200.
- **Face coverings in regional Victoria** - Face coverings in regional Victoria continue to be recommended in situations where maintaining 1.5 metres distance is not possible – however regional Victorians will have to put on face covering when visiting metropolitan Melbourne or Mitchell Shire for one of the permitted reasons.
- This is a difficult and uncertain time for many Victorians, and support is vital and available. For more information about managing stress and support options, call the Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Services on 1800 512 348
- A **one-off \$300 payment** to support Victorian workers, including parents and guardians, who are required to self-isolate while they wait for the results is available.
- A one-off \$1,500 Worker Support Payment continues to be available to support Victorian workers who test positive or a close contact tests positive for coronavirus (COVID-19) and need to self-isolate but are unable to work during their isolation, have no income during this period, and are not entitled to any paid sick leave, special pandemic leave or other income support.
- For more information about the worker support payment, see [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Test Isolation and Worker Support Payments](#).
- **Pause on public and private elective surgeries:** In metropolitan Melbourne surgeries that have already been scheduled may proceed, while only new Category 1 and the most urgent Category 2 surgeries can be booked. IVF treatments such as egg retrievals will be able to continue given the time critical nature of these procedures and minimal impact on hospital capacity. This is due to the increase in coronavirus (COVID-19) cases and to ensure our hospitals have the beds, equipment and staff available if aged care residents need to be transferred.

More information

Clinical information

[Latest coronavirus \(COVID-19\) information for Victorian health services and general practice](#)

Consumer information

[Financial support – for coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)

[Translated resources in over 50 languages](#)

[Victoria's current restrictions](#)

[Latest coronavirus information from the World Health Organization](#)

[Latest travel advice from Smartraveller](#)

Contacts

Medical practitioners needing clinical information or to notify confirmed cases can contact the Department of Health and Human Services Communicable Diseases Section on 1300 651 160 (24 hours).

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Contact

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The department acknowledges Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people as the Traditional Custodians of the land and acknowledges and pays respect to their Elders, past and present.

The department is committed to safe and inclusive work places, policies and services for people of LGBTIQ communities and their families.



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