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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).

29/08/2020

What's new?

- As of 29 August 2020, 94 new cases have been diagnosed since yesterday, with a total number of coronavirus (COVID-19) cases in Victoria is 18,903.
- Of the new cases, 16 are linked to outbreaks or complex cases and 78 are under investigation.
- Sadly, there have been 18 new deaths reported since yesterday. To date, 513 people have died from coronavirus (COVID-19) in Victoria.
- There are 4223 cases that may indicate community transmission.
- There are 2983 cases currently active in Victoria. 15,324 people have recovered.
- 481 people are in hospital. This includes 26 patients in intensive care.
- A total of 2,196,126 test results have been received. This is an increase of 18,114 since yesterday.
- Each fortnight, there have been more than three tests for every hundred people in all Melbourne metropolitan local government areas.
- You can find further details in today's [coronavirus \(COVID-19\) media release](#).
- The DHHS website has up-to-date data available. See full details in the [interactive daily report](#).

Current advice to clinicians

- You can now notify the department of a confirmed diagnosis of coronavirus (COVID-19) online. You can submit an [online form to our public health team](#), rather than calling us, saving you time and resolving your case load more efficiently.
- The online form is available on the [DHHS website](#) as well as the [Health.vic website](#).
- Due to an increased risk of transmission of coronavirus (COVID-19) the Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) Taskforce has updated its advice for all health care workers in Victoria. It is now a requirement that staff who are directly involved in treating patients must wear a face shield (where practical). Read more about [personal protective equipment](#) and download the updated [Guide to the conventional use of PPE \(Word\)](#) on our website.
- Visit the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) website for advice on [how to manage clinical waste from coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#).
- The [Coronavirus: Case and contact management guidelines for health services and general practitioners](#) offers a range of guidance, including when a health care worker can return to work from quarantine or isolation.
- Further information on [how we can protect our health care workers](#) including advice for testing, emergency accommodation and other assistance can be found online.
- [Protecting our healthcare workers \(PDF\)](#) sets out the very latest in our understanding of coronavirus (COVID-19) and how it can spread within healthcare settings – both hospitals and aged care facilities.
- The Victorian Government has established a Healthcare Worker Infection Prevention and Wellbeing Taskforce, bringing together infection control experts and workforce representatives, who will examine and introduce measures to prevent the spread of coronavirus (COVID-19) in healthcare settings.
- 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, or loss or change in sense of smell or taste)

Note: testing is also 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)*

***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](#).
- The Department of Health and Human Services will continue distributing masks to eligible Victorians. General practices can place orders for these masks. More information is available on the [reusable face masks page](#).

Victoria's restriction levels

- Victoria's State of Emergency has been extended until 11.59pm on Sunday 13 September 2020.
- Victoria's State of Disaster is in place until Sunday 13 September 2020. This gives police and emergency services more powers to make sure people comply with public health directions.
- Melbourne moved to [Stage 4 restrictions](#) on Sunday 2 August 2020.
- Regional Victoria moved to [Stage 3 restrictions](#) on 5 August 2020.
- A curfew is in place for Melbourne from 8pm to 5am. The only reasons to leave home during these times are for work, medical care and caregiving.
- Employers must issue a permitted [worker permit](#) to staff members that are required to attend a work site.
- All Victorians must now wear a face covering when leaving home. The DHHS website has more information on [face masks and coverings](#).

Key messages for the community

- All Victorians, including those in regional locations, are to stay home and get tested even with the mildest of symptoms. This includes fever, chills, cough, sore throat, shortness of breath, runny nose and loss or change in sense of smell or taste. Go home straight after your test and self-isolate while you wait for the results. [Go to the DHHS testing map for locations](#).
- Wear a face mask or covering when you leave home, unless a lawful exception applies.
- Information is available about [disposing of personal protective equipment at home and in the workplace](#) as a downloadable factsheet.
- Victorians are reminded that no matter when we ease restrictions, wearing a mask, physically distancing and being on the lookout for symptoms must continue to be part of our "COVID Normal" for some time to come.
- [Victorian coronavirus \(COVID-19\) data](#) related to active case numbers, deaths, outbreaks, cases in aged care settings and hospitalisations is now publicly available each day on the website.
- This is a difficult and uncertain time for all so support is vital and available. For more information on managing stress and support options, call the Coronavirus Mental Wellbeing Support Services on 1800 512 348.
- Financial support is also available. The Coronavirus (COVID-19) Test Isolation Payment is being increased to \$450. You can find more information on [Coronavirus \(COVID-19\) Test Isolation and Worker Support Payments](#) on our website.
- Check our website for [information and advice about current restriction levels](#) in place, including the updated directions, stage 4 and stage 3 restrictions.
- Victorians can leave their home if they are not safe and go and seek help and support at one of the orange doors or other family violence support services. If you or someone you know is at risk or experiencing family violence, call 000 in an emergency or safe steps 24/7 crisis service on 1800 015 188.
- The Partners in Wellbeing hotline (1300 375 330) is open Monday to Friday 8.30am to 5pm and until 10pm on weekdays. Referrals are encouraged from people who identify as LGBTIQ,

multicultural, Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander people, veterans and people experiencing homelessness. Additional support for business owners is available through access to business advisors and financial counsellors.

- Volunteering is made easier by the *We Volunteer* an online portal; a platform designed for Victorians to provide their expressions of interest and outline their skills and search for roles that meet their interest. For more information and access go to wevolunteer.org.au.
- If Victorians are experiencing loneliness or social disconnection, they can call the Victorian Coronavirus Hotline (1800 675 398) and connections will be arranged in their local region.
- A factsheet on how to '[Reduce your risk of coronavirus \(COVID-19\)](#)', has been [translated into 49 languages](#) and is on our website. A video from the Chief Health Officer showing our community 'how to safely wear a mask' has been [dubbed into a variety of languages](#) for the public.

Clinical information

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

[Latest information about providing immunisation services during Coronavirus Pandemic](#).

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

Address: 50 Lonsdale Street
Melbourne, Victoria, Australia
3000

Phone: [1300 650 172](tel:1300650172)

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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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