

NEWS RELEASE

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Help Slow the Spread of COVID-19

NIPISSING & PARRY SOUND, ON - We are yet again at a pivotal point in the COVID-19 pandemic. We need your help to slow the spread of COVID-19 by limiting your contacts and getting a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine if you are eligible. Provincially, we are seeing the highest daily case counts since mid-May, and the case rate is rising sharply. It is expected that close to 100 per cent of all cases in Ontario will be Omicron by the end of the month, and case counts will rise even more quickly as Omicron takes over.

Locally, our case counts are also increasing with some presumed to be the Omicron variant. The rolling seven-day case rate for our Health Unit region has increased by 113 per cent since November 30, 2021, including individuals testing positive in connection with Omicron outbreaks in other parts of the province.

“Cases are spreading rapidly and, at this time, hospitalizations and ICU admissions are remaining steady, but usually we don’t see increases in hospital admissions for a week or two after cases increase,” explains Dr. Jim Chirico, Medical Officer of Health. “We are at a point where making smart decisions can help decrease the spread; including being fully vaccinated, getting your third dose when you are eligible, limiting the number of people you gather with and staying home if you feel unwell.”

According to Public Health Ontario (2021), “it is estimated that each Omicron case is infecting 7.7 times more individuals than Delta in Ontario during the November 28 to December 9 period”.

“Although vaccines have been found to be less effective in preventing Omicron infections, they are showing strong protection against the severe disease, especially with a third dose,” explains Dr. Chirico. “The Health Unit has opened up a number of vaccine appointments over the next two weeks for eligible individuals to receive their third dose to help protect themselves against Omicron.”

The Health Unit will continue to monitor the local situation and will make local decisions as needed. To see up-to-date information on the local COVID-19 situation visit myhealthunit.ca/COVID-19.

References

Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). (2021). *Early dynamics of omicron in Ontario, November 1 to December 9, 2021*. Toronto, ON: Queen’s Printer for Ontario

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