



CDA COVID-19 UPDATE

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A Message for CDA Stakeholders

Below is a status update from the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) about the COVID-19 pandemic for the week ending October 22, 2021. CDA's next COVID-19 update is slated for November 19, 2021.

Quick Facts: Current COVID-19 Situational Report

Dr. Aaron Burry, CDA's COVID-19 Team Lead and Deputy CEO - Professional Affairs, provides a video update on the COVID-19 pandemic to the Presidents and CEOs of CDA's Corporate Member provincial dental associations.



Video Length: 22 minutes. Recorded: October 20, 2021.

Video highlights:

Global fast facts

- 6.7 billion doses of vaccine have been administered worldwide
- 36% of the global population is now fully vaccinated
- Global case numbers have declined week over week and are currently 2.8 million cases per week, down from 4.1 million cases per week during the summer.
- Some questions remain:

- Will case numbers continue to decline through winter?
- Will governments lift the current states of emergency?
- Will the vaccination of 5-to-11-year-olds begin early in the new year?

Update on Canadian economy: This year's economic forecast is for "stagflation," a combination of low growth and high inflation. Individuals can expect to pay more than an optimal 2% Bank of Canada targeted increase for goods and services fueled by production delays and increased transportation costs.

Canadian dentists should expect more supply chain issues and access to certain dental supplies may decrease. Due to rises in energy prices, items made from plastic, particularly consumables for dentists, will likely increase in price. Many previous routine practices around supply and storage of dental supplies may no longer apply as items are on backorder or not available. This means that Canadian dentists might need to start rethinking how to manage stocks of office supplies to account for shortages.

Case numbers and pandemic strategy: At this point in time, Canada is at 9 cases per 100,000. This number is down from September but represents a slight increase from Oct 13, 2021. This increase can be attributed to gatherings related to the Thanksgiving holiday and the resumption of in-person schooling. The United States is experiencing a similar upward trend.

Canada is gradually moving towards a "managed strategy," i.e., coexisting with COVID-19 using vaccination and other public health measures, without lockdowns. For Canada, this includes the vaccination of specific mandatory groups, continued indoor masking, the introduction of vaccination certificates, and continued activity restrictions or controls.

A recap of Wave 4 and looking ahead: Dr. Burry provides a snapshot of facts and figures of vaccinated vs. unvaccinated populations, including infection and death rates, followed by a recap of the 4th wave of COVID.

What has been consistent in all previous waves is the 90-day pattern. In Canada, the amplitude of the most recent wave was only half the amplitude of previous waves, peaking at 4,300 cases nationally compared with 9,500 cases in the previous two waves. This reduced amplitude is largely associated with more vaccination in the population.

The Delta variant has been a very dominant strain during the current wave. It is believed that this variant is more transmissible than other strains. It appears that currently, other variants such as Lambda and MU are largely disappearing. Dr. Burry underlines that basic public health measures to counteract the spread of the COVID-19 virus are likely to be with us indefinitely.

Areas of focus and important reminders for dentists:

- **Travel:** Sun destinations continue to be high-risk destinations for dentists and staff.

- **Think locally and be ready for flu season:**
 - Be extra cautious in areas of low vaccination or where clusters are reported. Consider what is happening in your community and how it affects you.
 - Be on guard for a resurgence of “lookalike” infections such as parainfluenza, influenza, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV). Early flu vaccination is recommended.
 - **IPAC and COVID-19 vaccinations:** Keep IPAC measures at an elevated level for the next year. [CDA encourages the full vaccination for all dentists and office staff](#), and wearing N95 masks and full eye protection during patient care. Also consider monitoring the vaccination status of patients for whom it has been longer than 6 months since their last dose.
 - **Hand and surface sanitation:** There has been a significant drop in hand and surface sanitization practise. This is driving seasonal influenza and other types of infections and leading to school shutdowns over concerns of COVID-19 outbreaks.
 - **Potential supply chain issues:** Start thinking about how to manage dental office supplies to plan for potential shortages coming in 2022.
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COVID-19 Practice Recovery Task Force (“The Task Force”):

This group includes representatives from all Corporate Member provincial dental associations (PDAs). The Task Force has worked throughout the pandemic providing:

- information exchange on return-to-practice status across the country;
- strategies for obtaining and securing PPEs; and
- communications to the public on dentists returning to practice.

The Task force addressed the early pressures of practice recovery and has shifted its focus to return to practice. At the October meeting, all indications were that dental offices have adjusted to the new realities related to practising in the COVID-19 era. The Task Force will be moving to complete its present workplan and will turn its attention to completing a comprehensive debriefing session to review the pandemic efforts to summarize and/or gather best practices, lessons learned, and other findings. The goal of this debriefing session will be to help best position dentistry for future disruptive events.

Update: Mental Health in the Workplace. Safeguarding your mental health and overall wellness is important, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

The Task Force has been focused on *The Working Mind*, a short course on mental health in the workplace, from the Mental Health Commission of Canada. [The Working Mind](#) is an evidence-based program designed to promote mental health and reduce the stigma

around mental illness in the workplace. By reducing stigma and discrimination, the course helps organizations create a culture that fosters greater awareness and support for mental health among employees, managers, and employers.

The Task Force has been working to adapt the content for dentistry. CDA is approaching the last phases of customizing this pilot course, which will be called, *The Working Mind: Workplace Mental Health & Wellness for Oral Health Care Professionals*. CDA is working closely with Corporate Member provincial dental associations to determine how this course could potentially be integrated into their membership offerings. It is anticipated that this course will become available in 2022. CDA will provide more details as this project moves ahead.

CDA Knowledge Products:

[CDA Oasis](#) is an online community for clinical support and the latest information on issues and technology impacting the dental profession. The following discussions have been recorded since CDA's last COVID-19 update in June 2021. Be sure to check these out:

- [Federal Election 2021 – What Does the Result Mean for Dentists?:](#)
Mr. Michel Breau, Manager of Government and Community Relations at the Canadian Dental Association (CDA), provides a brief overview of the results of the 44th Federal election which took place on Monday, September 20, 2021, and explains what the result means for Canadian dentists. **(October 12, 2021)**
- [Pandemic Stress Observations:](#)
Dr. Amanda Trotti, a general practitioner from Toronto, joins Dr. John O'Keefe to share her observations on the oral manifestations of stress among patients in her practice during the pandemic. Dr. Trotti highlights the importance of being especially sensitive to patient needs at this time, and suggests taking extra time with stressed patients. **(October 5, 2021)**
- [Trends on Canadians' Attitudes Related to COVID-19 and Dental Offices:](#)
Ever since the early stages of the COVID-19 pandemic back in March 2020, the Canadian Dental Association (CDA) has continued to track evolving public behaviour, attitudes, and perceptions as they relate to the dental community in Canada through Abacus Data COVID-19 Tracking Surveys. As we now enter what many Canadians fear will be a challenging time in the trajectory of the COVID-19 pandemic, Abacus has presented their latest findings from their August 2021 COVID-19 Tracking Survey. **(September 30, 2021)**

New: CDA Essentials, Issue 5 is available [online](#). Below are some of the edition's highlights pertaining to the pandemic. Issue 5 will be available in October 2021.

- [CDA Statement on Mandatory Vaccination](#)
- [Your COVID-19 Questions Answered](#)

- [Dr. Michael Chow A Year After Recovery](#)



Click image to access CDA Essentials, Issue 5, 2021

Mental Health and Wellness:

Remember to prioritize your well-being and take time to check in with how you are feeling. Wellness Together Canada offers [free and confidential online mental health and substance use supports available 24/7](#), including 1 to 1 counselling. For more information, check out this factsheet, [Wellness Together Canada – At a Glance](#).

This tip sheet also provides [10 things you can do right now to reduce anxiety, stress, worry related to COVID-19](#).

The Members' Assistance Program (MAP) is available: Individuals can access mental health and wellness support by calling CDSPI's Members' Assistance Program (MAP) at **1.844.578.4040** or visiting www.workhealthlife.com. MAP provides a variety of resources to help individuals deal with life's challenges. It is a confidential counselling, referral and information service for individuals who are dealing with mental health challenges or need advice on topics such as physical fitness, nutrition or parenting. MAP services and resources are offered through Shepell, Canada's largest provider of Employee and Family Assistance Programs.



Free counselling, referral and information service for dentists, dental office employees, and their families.

The CDA COVID-19 Response Team works diligently on a range of fronts to help minimize and mitigate the impacts of COVID-19 on the dental profession. CDA is working to address scientific, clinical, economic and business-related matters impacting dentistry, including efforts to increase awareness about the mental health and wellness of dentists, their families and dental office employees during these challenging times. CDA will communicate regular updates as new information becomes available.



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