"Close" Contact … OR NOT?

Questions & Answers

What is a close contact?

'Close contact' generally means being less than 2 metres away in the same room, workspace, or area for more than 15 minutes with a confirmed case of COVID-19, starting from 48 hours before the person began having symptoms or 48 hours before the test day for people who did not have symptoms.

I might have been exposed to someone who has tested positive for COVID-19. What happens now?

Once Peterborough Public Health (PPH) has been notified of a positive result, a public health nurse will follow-up with the individual to let them know they have tested positive for COVID-19 and complete an interview to determine the places they went while infectious (e.g. to work or public places) and who their close contacts are. PPH may need to speak with others to assess risk e.g. the person's employer

1. A public health nurse will follow-up with all the close contacts that have been identified to advise them to immediately self-isolate for 14 days from the last day of exposure to the case. It may also be recommended that they seek assessment and testing for COVID-19.

2. Close contacts will also be provided information on how to self-monitor for symptoms and what to do if they do develop symptoms over the 14 days (the incubation period).

What happens if the individual was out in the community (e.g., at work, place of worship, or at a grocery store) while infectious?

If a person was in contact with others while infectious, PPH will determine whether there was any increased risk of exposure to others. For example, a brief interaction (e.g., walking past someone)) does not pose an increased risk. If a public health risk is identified, PPH will take any other measures needed to reduce the risk of transmission. This may include conducting an inspection, issuing an order, or notifying the public.

What if I am still worried and have not been contacted by PPH?

If you have not been contacted but you are concerned that you have been exposed to COVID-19,self-isolate immediately and call 705-743-1000 to speak with a public health nurse who can help assess your risk as a potential close contact. If you are experiencing any sign or symptom of COVID-19, regardless of your contact history, you should self-isolate and get tested. You can refer to the Peterborough Public Health website for local testing options.

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I learned about this case from social media – is Peterborough Public Health going to alert the public about this?

If we believe that there is an increased health risk to the public, PPH would alert the public of an outbreak in any facility, clinic, business or public setting. The public health measures that have been mandated by the province, if followed correctly, should help keep you safe.

When there is a low risk to the public, PPH encourages the facility to disclose this information to reassure the public they are working with public health and taking the necessary measures to control the spread of infection.

For questions or more information, call **705-743-1000** or visit **peterboroughpublichealth.ca/covid19**