

Midtown Massage & Wellness Centre

Plan for Return to Clinical Practice in Respect of COVID-19

This plan was developed with the goal of reducing the risk of exposure to the virus that causes Covid-19 for both patients and the practitioner within our clinical setting. Here, we identify the actions that the therapist at Midtown Massage & Wellness Centre commits to, and that all visiting patients must commit to, in order to resume massage therapy services.

“Coronavirus is transmitted via liquid droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. The virus can enter through these droplets through the eyes, nose or throat if you are in close contact.

The virus is not known to be airborne (e.g. transmitted through the particles floating in the air) and it is not something that comes in through the skin.

It can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough. That’s why we recommend you cough or sneeze into your arm and wash your hands regularly.”

Source: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/how-it-spreads>

The overall aim of these protocols is to reduce potential coronavirus transmission by:

- Required ongoing self-assessment for signs of Covid-19 related illness in both the patient and the therapist
- Reducing all physical, non-treatment related interactions amongst all people within the practice environment
- Hand hygiene requirements
- Avoiding face touching
- Enhanced cleaning protocols
- Appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Meeting professional obligations, particularly related to informed consent and liability insurance

Self-Assessment for Symptoms of COVID-19: For Patients & Therapists

Pre-Screening / Prior to Arrival

- Patients will be informed about their responsibilities at the time of booking. A notice will be placed on the website, and the online booking software will send them a copy of these protocols as part of a COVID-19 specific consent form they will be required to sign electronically, prior to arriving at their appointment.
- One day prior to their booked appointment, the patient will be required to complete the online BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool and to stay home if they experience any symptoms of COVID-19.
 - The tool can be found here: <https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- The therapist will phone the patient one day before their booked appointment to discuss using the self-assessment tool and to verify that it has been done.
- The therapist will use the BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment tool herself, daily and commits to canceling all appointments if symptoms appear.

- Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses and seasonal allergies. An appointment must be cancelled immediately if either the patient or the therapist presents with even mild symptoms that may be signs of COVID-19 including:
 - Fever
 - Cough
 - Chills
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat or pain with swallowing
 - Stuffy or runny nose
 - Loss of sense of smell
 - Headache
 - Muscle aches
 - Fatigue
 - Loss of appetite
- COVID-19 Symptoms may range from mild to severe. Patients are required to cancel appointments if they experience what they determine to be 'just the sniffles,' 'seasonal allergies' or 'just feeling under the weather,' on the day of their appointment.
- As a part of this consent form, patients must commit to understanding that while we've taken all possible measures to minimize risk of viral transmission, the nature of massage therapy means that physical distancing is not possible in the treatment room.
- In order for massage therapy treatment to commence the therapist and patient must agree that the therapeutic benefit of massage therapy outweighs any potential consequence of treatment, including the possibility of viral transmission.
- Patients must confirm that they have not been in contact with anyone displaying illness, or signs and symptoms of COVID-19 within 14 days prior to their treatment.
- Patients with higher risk profiles and/or weakened immune systems should consider alternatives for care and postpone treatment.
 - The patient and the therapist must both agree that the benefits of massage therapy outweigh the potential risks involved.
- Patients who develop even mild illness or symptoms should cancel booked appointments, even without notice.
 - They will not be charged a late cancellation fee if they cancel due to illness.

Upon Arrival

- The therapist will advise patients of her current Self-Assessment results upon their arrival at the clinic. Patients will be asked to share their own results.
- Upon arrival patients must confirm that they have done a pre-screening and have no signs of Covid-19 as outlined here: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms>
- Masks should be worn at all times within the clinic space. If the patient has a mask, they are asked to bring it with them and wear it when they arrive. If the patient does not have a mask but would like to wear one, therapist must supply mask to patient.

- Patient must confirm that they have not travelled outside British Columbia within 14 days prior to their appointment.
- The treatment will be cancelled immediately if the patient does not meet the pre-screening criteria upon physical presentation at the clinic.

Physical Distancing

Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- Only 1 patient/person is permitted in the clinic space at any given time. Patients must arrive unaccompanied.
- The therapist is the only other person who will be within the clinic space throughout the duration of the patient's appointment.
- The therapist and the patient will both maintain a space of 2 meters (6 feet) distance between each other in all clinic areas outside the treatment room.
- Chairs have been removed from the reception area
 - Patients are not permitted to lounge in the clinic reception area before or after the treatment.
- Water dispenser and business cards have all been removed from the clinic reception area. Water is available upon request.
- Nothing remains in the clinic space that cannot be disinfected after each touch.
- Appointment times are staggered to reduce the potential of patients crossing paths, and to allow for time in-between appointments for enhanced cleaning.
- Patients are asked to arrive on time and not early or late for appointments.
- Patients are required to wait in their vehicles or outside the clinic, until the therapists comes to the clinic door to call them in.
- The clinic door will be opened for the patient by the therapist and will be locked behind them to prevent anyone else from entering the space during the course of their treatment. The clinic door will be re-opened by the therapist at the end of the appointment for the patient to leave without touching the door knob.

Within the Treatment Room

- It is not possible to maintain physical distancing while in the treatment room.
- Patients will be asked to keep all personal belongings on countertop, which can and will be sanitized between patients.

Restroom for Patient Use

- The restroom will display hand washing guidelines.
- Soap and fresh towels for drying will be available at all times.
- Therapist will sanitize bathroom after each patient use.
 - Door handles, soap dispenser, flusher, faucets, and handicap bar

Hand Hygiene

Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- Immediately upon entering the clinic space the patient must either:

- Go directly to the hand washing sink without touching anything inside the clinic and wash their hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and then dry thoroughly, or
- If hands are visibly soiled, the patient must opt to wash hands at the hand washing sink.
- The therapist will wash hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds between patients, before and after disinfecting spaces, before donning gloves and after taking gloves off, and before donning or doffing other PPE like face masks or shields.
- Hand washing protocols will be posted visibly in the reception area and at sinks.
- Payment occurs in the reception area. Cash will not be accepted at this time. A wireless Point of Sale system with Tap is available for card use. In the event that this does not work, manual entry under direction of patients verbal cues will be performed. The POS machine will be sanitized between each patient.
- Receipts will be emailed, not printed.

In the Treatment Room

- The therapist will open the door to the treatment room and allow the patient to enter. The therapist will open/close the door before, during and after the treatment as required – reducing the need for the patient to touch the door.
 - Patients will be permitted to open the door for themselves after the treatment to let themselves out of the treatment room.
 - Tissue is available inside the treatment room that the patient may use as a barrier when opening the door.
 - Hand sanitizer is available within the treatment room; patients will be asked to wash or sanitize their hands after the treatment.
 - The door and doorknobs will be disinfected between each patient.

Avoid Face Touching

- The therapist will communicate with the patient that coronavirus can be transmitted by touch if droplets are on the hand when it touches the face, as it can transfer those infected droplets to the mouth, nose or eyes.
- Tissue will be available throughout the clinic: in the reception area, treatment room and washroom in order that patients and the therapist may use tissue to address an itch and/or touch the face for any other reason.
- Intra-oral and external TMJ treatments will not be conducted at this time.
- Musculature of the face will not be palpated or treated at this time.

Enhanced Cleaning

- Additional time is required between patients to allow for thorough cleaning of the treatment room.
 - Therapist will end treatment at least 5 minutes early to allow for additional sanitizing time
- Visibly soiled surfaces will be cleaned followed by disinfection with a Canada Health Approved for use against COVID-19 disinfectant as listed here: <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/disinfectants/covid-19/list.html>
- Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day, including the restroom.
- All high touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected between patients, regardless of appearances. High touch surfaces include (but are not limited to):
 - Light switches, door knobs, POS machine, electronic devices, table surfaces, chairs, stools, window coverings, faucets, etc.

- The treatment table, table levers, face cradle, lotion bottles will be immediately after each treatment.
- No hydrotherapy supplies, thermophores, table warmers or covers will be used.
- A cleaning checklist will be checked off and initialled after each patient
- All linens are single use only and will be laundered using high heat, detergent and bleach between each use.
- Laundry will be placed in laundry basket lined with plastic and closed after added to.
 - Laundry loads will be kept to 3 sheet sets per load (sheet set= Mask, face piece, bottom sheet and top sheet).
 - One cap of bleach will be added to each load.
 - Laundry will be transported in bin to avoid contact with therapists clothing.
 - Hands will be washed after touching soiled laundry

Personal Protective Equipment

- Therapists are encouraged to wear mask in clinic as much as possible, both in and out of the treatment room
 - If either the patient or therapist requests masks be worn during the treatment, masks must be provided to the patient and be worn by the therapist
 - Masks will be changed between each patient
- The therapist will wear gloves if/when appropriate.
 - Gloves may be appropriate when over-use of cleaning and/or chemicals causes skin irritation, or when the therapist's hands or skin of the hands are otherwise injured.
 - Hands will be washed prior to putting the gloves on and immediately after removing them.
- Patients are encouraged to wear mask while in clinic and while receiving treatments
- Therapists are required to change into their clinic attire upon entry into the clinic
 - Therapist will also change out of clinic attire before leaving the premises
 - Clothing will be stored in a sealable bag and laundered at their home

Professional Obligations

Liability Insurance

- The therapist carries professional liability insurance through Wilson M. Beck as provided through the Registered Massage Therapist Association of BC.
- The therapist is following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by the Registered Massage Therapists Association of BC, the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia and the Provincial Health Officer and that they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.
- No guarantees have been made by the therapist, that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment.

In the Event That a Patient Tests Positive for COVID-19 Having Been to a Massage Therapy Appointment within the 14-days Prior to Onset of Symptoms

- The patient will contact the therapist and inform her of positive test results and possible transmission of the virus immediately.

In the Event That a Patient Alleges they Caught COVID-19 from the Therapist

- The therapist will immediately call public health at 8-1-1 to report the alleged transmission, providing both the name of the RMT and **the name and contact details of the patient.**
 - The patient must agree to the release of this information under these circumstances in order to receive treatment.
- All massage therapy appointments will be cancelled and the Therapist will cease to provide services until Public Health has investigated and provided direction.
- The therapist will immediately self-isolate until Public Health has investigated and provided direction.

In the Event That the Therapist Catches COVID-19 or Displays Symptoms of COVID-19

- The therapist will immediately self-isolate.
- The therapist will call public health at 8-1-1 to report the symptoms and request access to COVID-19 testing.
 - If testing is granted:
 - All massage therapy appointments will be cancelled and the Therapist will cease to provide services until test results are returned negative.
 - If testing proves positive the therapist will follow Public Health directives in informing patients treated over the previous 14 days about potential transmission.
 - If testing is not granted:
 - All massage therapy appointments will be cancelled and the Therapist will cease to provide services for a minimum of 10-days beyond the onset of symptoms, and/or until symptoms cease.

In the Event That the Therapist Comes into Close Contact with Someone Showing Signs of Illness or Tests Positive for COVID-19

- The therapist will immediately self-isolate.
- All massage therapy appointments will be cancelled and the therapist will cease to provide services until:
 - The close contact has been tested for COVID-19 and the results proved negative and the therapist is well,
 - OR after self-isolating for 14 days and having no symptoms of fever develop.
 - OR being cleared by a public health official.

Informed Consent

In the current environment of COVID-19 risk, informed consent requires that the patient be informed and understands that:

- Any massage therapy treatment involves some risk of COVID-19 transmission;
- The therapist is following protocol to help reduce or mitigate risk where possible, but that risk cannot be reduced to zero;
- The patient consents to the treatment despite some risk;
- And the RMT will document the patient's consent in advance and at every treatment.