



## 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. In order to resume a safe massage therapy practice, we will identify the actions that the therapists at White Oaks Massage & Wellness commit to, and that all visiting patients must commit to as well.

*“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 & THERAPIST

#### 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 new COVID-19 specific protocols.
- One day prior to their booked appointment, the patient will be required to complete the online BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment tool. If the patient is experiencing ANY of the COVID-19

symptoms they MUST CANCEL their massage appointment and are asked to stay home and/or contact 8-1-1. Late cancellation fees will be waived during these unprecedented times.

- Clients are asked to bring in their own facemask which MAY be required to be worn during the length of their treatment. If the client does not have a mask upon arrival, one will be made available at no additional charge.
- All staff members and therapists must complete a BC COVID-19 Self- Assessment on themselves daily and will stay home/cancel appointments if they are experiencing any symptoms.
- 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, therefore, patients are required to cancel appointments if they experience what they determine to be 'just the sniffles,' 'seasonal allergies', or 'just feel under the weather' on or before the day of their appointment. This is non-negotiable.
- The BC COVID-19 Symptoms Self-Assessment tool can be found here:  
<https://bc.thrive.health/covid19/en>
- Patients with higher risk profiles and/or weakened immune systems should consider alternatives for care and/or postpone treatment.

#### Upon Arrival

- Clients will be screened again upon arrival. This will include a series of standard self-assessment questions as well as a temperature check with a non-contact thermometer. The therapist will assess the results and will either continue with treatment or cancel the appointment. Clients will not be charged for any last-minute cancellations.
- Clients will be required to sign an inform consent form.
- Masks MAY be required to be worn 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, a

single-use mask will be provided at no additional cost and they will be asked to wear it upon entering the clinic space.

## PHYSICAL DISTANCING

### Reception Area

- Clients must arrive unaccompanied unless patient is a minor who requires parent/guardian, or infirm and needs assistance.
- Clients are required to wait outside in their car and not in reception – you may enter the clinic 5 minutes prior to the beginning of your treatment.

### Within the Treatment Room

- It is not possible to maintain physical distancing while in the treatment room.
- Clients are asked that you bring all of your belongings with you into the treatment room.
- Table warmers and heating pads will not be made available.

### After Treatment

- Clients are asked to respect social distancing and sanitization time required by the therapist and will therefore promptly leave the clinic after paying for their appointment or arranging direct billing.

### Restroom for Patient Use

- The restroom will be sanitized after each use and/or frequently throughout the day. Soap and paper towels as well as proper handwashing guidelines have been made available for staff and client use.

## HAND HYGIENE

Immediately upon entering the clinic space the patient must either:

- Go directly to the handwashing 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
- Use the hand sanitizer dispenser in the reception area at the entry
- If hands are visibly soiled, the patient must opt to wash hands at the handwashing sink.
- Therapists 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 facemasks or shields.
- Hand washing protocols will be posted visibly in the reception area and by the sinks.

- Payment occurs in the reception area. Cash will not be accepted at this time. We encourage patients to use the Tap option. The POS machine will be sanitized between each patient. Receipts will be emailed, not printed.

#### ENHANCED CLEANING

- Additional time has been scheduled between patients to allow for thorough cleaning of the treatment room.
- 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. This includes light switches, doorknobs, POS machine, electronic devices, table surfaces, chairs, stools, faucets, etc.
- The treatment table, table levers, face cradle, lotion bottles will be immediately sanitized after each treatment.
- A Cleaning and Disinfectant Log will be on display in the restroom and staff room.
- All linens, including blankets and pillowcases are single use only and will be laundered using high heat, detergent between each use.
- A plastic bin has been placed in each treatment room. Clients are asked to keep all their personal belongings in this bin during the treatment. Post treatment, this same bin will be used to carry used linens to the laundry room for washing and disinfecting where after it will be sanitized to become available for use to the next client.

#### PERSONAL PROTECTIVE EQUIPMENT (PPE)

- Therapists must wear a face mask before and after treatment.
- Patients must wear a clean facemask throughout the clinic.
- Therapists will wear a face mask and/or goggles and/or gloves at the discretion of the therapist and/or clients request during the massage.
- Gloves must be worn when cleaning and/or using chemicals that cause skin irritation, or when the therapist's hands or skin of the hands are injured.
- Hands will be washed prior to putting the gloves on and immediately after doffing.

## PROFESSIONAL OBLIGATIONS

### Liability Insurance

- All therapists carry professional liability insurance
- Therapists are following all the necessary health and safety guidelines outlined by their regulatory college, [BC Centre for Disease Control \(BCCDC\)](#), [Provincial Health Office](#) (PHO), and [WorkSafeBC](#), 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 test positive for COVID-19 having an “in-person” appointment within the 14-days prior to onset of symptoms

- The patient will contact the therapist and inform them of positive test results and possible transmission of the virus immediately
- The therapist will immediately self-isolate
- The therapist will call public health at 8-1-1 to report the possible transmission and act on direction of Provincial Health.

In the event that a patient alleges they caught COVID-19 from a therapist

- The therapist will immediately call public health at 8-1-1 to report the alleged transmission, providing both the name of the therapist 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 a therapist 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 for COVID-19 testing.
  - If testing is granted:
    - All ‘in-person’ appointments will be cancelled and the therapist will cease to provide services until test results are returned negative.
    - If testing returns positive, the therapist will follow Public Health directions in informing patients treated over the previous 14 days about potential transmission.

- If testing is not granted:
  - All 'in-person' 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 COVID-19 related symptoms or tests positive for COVID-19:

- The therapist will immediately self-isolate.
- All 'in-person' 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.

#### Asymptomatic Spreaders

- Asymptomatic transmission of the coronavirus is an unavoidable risk of practice until we have acquired herd immunity, there is an effective treatment, or vaccine against COVID-19
- We have put into place protocols to help reduce that risk as outlined in this documentation
- No guarantees have been made by the therapist that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment

#### Informed Consent

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

- Any 'in-person' treatments involve 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 therapist will document the patient's consent in advance and at every treatment.

#### Resources:

[BC COVID-19 Self-Assessment Tool](#)

[BC Centre for Disease Control, Symptoms](#)

[BC Centre for Disease Control, Travel](#)

[BC Centre for Disease Control](#)

[Provincial Health Officer Update : May 15, 2020](#)

[WorkSafeBC](#)