



First Nations Health Authority
Health through wellness

GOOD MEDICINE:

Supporting Land-Based Healing and Wellness during COVID-19

Precautions and Safety Considerations

1. Activities should be undertaken by individuals or family groups who are isolating in households together already. (Don't get together with people from other households as per current physical distancing recommendations.)
2. Follow the latest safety advice from the FNHA, the Provincial Health Officer/ your Regional Health Authority, British Columbia and Canada.
3. If getting gas, supplies, or groceries, take extra precaution and sterilize all items following the latest safety advice from the organizations above. Plan ahead as many items may be hard to come by at the moment.
4. Wildfires are a very real danger in British Columbia. If you spot a fire or a column of smoke while travelling through the province, call and report it to the BC Wildfire Service at 1-800-663-5555 or hands-free at *5555 on your cell phone.
5. While on the land, we play an important role in reducing human-caused fires. Discarded cigarette butts, campfires, hot exhaust pipes coming into contact with dry grass and vegetation, power tools (such as chainsaws), candles or mosquito coils and even discarded glass can all ignite and start a wildfire. It is important to be careful when in the outdoors, not only when enjoying a campfire or off-roading in the backcountry, but also in using tools and handling, storing and disposing of combustible materials and fuels. Find more information about wildfire prevention at this website:
<https://www.travel-british-columbia.com/travel-resources/tips/fires-campfires/>
6. Open Burning Restrictions were issued for all High Smoke Sensitivity Zones in British Columbia in April. These restrictions were directly in response to the COVID-19 pandemic and the effect pollutants have on viral respiratory infections. All of the areas affected by this open burning restriction can be found at this website:
<http://bcfireinfo.for.gov.bc.ca/hprScripts/WildfireNews/Bans.asp>

- 7.** Follow proper pandemic hygiene – wash hands more than usual for a minimum of 20 seconds, sterilize items with over 60 percent alcohol-based sanitizer, take extra cleaning measures.
- 8.** Develop a protocol for handing out items to community members, e.g., only non-symptomatic people harvesting/distributing, ensure clean hands and proper hygiene, sanitize or isolate items, leave items at the door rather than going inside someone's house, etc.
- 9.** If possible, ensure local/traditional harvesting management practices and traditional laws are followed so we are not overharvesting. This is important during a time when more people than usual may be utilizing the territory.
- 10.** Take extra precautions in the preparation and distribution of food and traditional medicines. Sterilize kitchens areas, including all preparation surfaces, cooking tools and utensils and frequently touched surfaces in the kitchen before beginning.
- 11.** Only take traditional medicines from a known and reliable source. Our medicines can be very powerful; ensure harvesting, preservation, and use of medicines are under the direction of traditional knowledge holders.
- 12.** Take extra safety precautions to ensure injuries are not sustained that would require hospitalization or doctor visits. Our medical systems are overburdened at this time, so extra care is needed to avoid requiring any unnecessary medical care or exposure to the virus.
- 13.** Ensure proper land-based safety measures are followed, for example, bear awareness, fire and water safety, carrying a CB radio, First Aid Kit, and spare tires.
- 14.** Ensure you aren't going to places where there may be other people, and remember to adhere to the latest physical distancing requirement (as of April 20, that was a minimum of six feet / two metres).
- 15.** Consider vehicle safety precautions. Within households you can share a vehicle as long as members are free from symptoms but do not share across households. Use your judgement and avoid any unnecessary risks at all times.