

# Interim Recommendations for Private Practice Therapeutic Care (e.g., chiropractors, acupuncturists, massage therapists, osteopaths, etc.)

May 10, 2020

## COVID-19 Preventive Measures in the Workplace

These measures apply when sustained community transmission has been confirmed by public health authorities.

Based on current knowledge, it is known that the disease can be transmitted by asymptomatic people who are carriers of the disease. Therefore, preventive measures are recommended at all times.

**To protect the health of employees and others in the workplace, employers and workers are asked to:**

- 1) **Adjust work methods and schedules** to encourage respect for the directives applicable to employees in mandatory isolation (teleworking) and to those with other types of constraints (flexible hours, teleworking, teleconsultation).
- 2) Advise workers not to come to work if they present symptoms suggestive of COVID-19 (fever (> 38°C) OR recent cough OR exacerbated chronic cough OR difficulty breathing OR sudden loss of sense of smell without nasal congestion with or without loss of sense of taste OR muscle pain OR headache OR intense fatigue OR severe loss of appetite OR sore throat OR diarrhea) and call 1-877-644-4545.
  - If a worker starts experiencing symptoms in the workplace, have a procedure for isolating them in a room or have them wear a procedural (or surgical) mask. Call 1-877-644-4545.
- 3) Promote **hand hygiene** by providing workers and clients with all necessary supplies (running water, soap, hydroalcoholic solutions, touchless trash cans, disposable napkins or paper towels, etc.).
  - Wash hands frequently with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.
  - Use a hydroalcoholic solution for at least 20 seconds if soap and water are not available.
  - Avoid touching the eyes, nose or mouth with hands:  
[https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/2438\\_prevention\\_controle\\_infections\\_hygiene\\_mains.pdf](https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/publications/2438_prevention_controle_infections_hygiene_mains.pdf)  
(in French only).
- 4) Promote **respiratory etiquette** (coughing into one's bent elbow, or into a tissue that is discarded immediately after use, then washing hands as soon as possible).
- 5) Promote **social distancing** measures. For example:
  - Avoid all physical contact.
  - Avoid face-to-face meetings and gatherings (e.g., do not get together during breaks).
  - Avoid sharing supplies and equipment (e.g., tablets, pens or pencils, communication devices, etc.).

- Encourage the use of digital documents and limit the sharing of paper documents.
- Remove unnecessary items from common areas (e.g., magazines, knick-knacks, etc.).
- Limit exiting and moving about to what is strictly necessary.
- Pay particular attention to the following situations:
  - **Waiting room and customer service:**
    - (1) For customer service, if the two-metre distance between persons cannot be applied, install a Plexiglas-type physical barrier at the cash desk to limit the risk of staff contamination.
    - (2) Space out appointments with clients and ask them to respect their appointment times.
    - (3) If there are several persons in the waiting room, a distance of two metres must be maintained between them or the space can be arranged to ensure that this distance is respected.
      - (a) If it is not possible to ensure a distance of two metres between those in the waiting room, then a method using barriers must be implemented (e.g., installation of a Plexiglas pane).
    - (4) Payment:
      - (a) Limit hand-to-hand exchanges of bills, coins, cheques, credit cards, telephones, etc.;
      - (b) Wherever possible, opt for payment by card or cell phone. Ideally, clients should avoid touching terminal keys by using contactless methods of payment instead;
      - (c) Wearing gloves is not recommended; this may produce a false sense of security and result in contamination through contact with multiple surfaces due to the gloves not being changed. If gloves are worn anyway, throw them in the trash after use and wash your hands;
      - (d) Keep payment terminals clean. Ideally, terminals should be disinfected many times a day and whenever the terminal is visibly dirty. Cleaning with the usual products, many times a day, can also be an alternative. Ensure that the products used are suitable for use on the terminal, according to the manufacturer's recommendations.
  - **Meal times:**
    - (1) Have workers eat at their desks or in rooms large enough to ensure a distance of more than two metres between each of them.
    - (2) If no other room is available, modify meal time schedules so as to have a limited number of workers in the dining room at all times.
    - (3) Do not exchange cups, glasses, plates, or utensils; wash dishes in hot water with soap.
- Regularly clean surfaces that are frequently touched by workers and clients (tables, counters, door handles, telephones, computer accessories, pencils or pens, etc.) and disinfect them after each work shift, with the products normally used.
- Disinfect dining rooms after each meal and restrooms once per work shift, with the disinfectant product normally used.

- Refer to the information sheet “Procédures de nettoyage et de désinfection de l’environnement et des équipements de soins pour les cliniques médicales” for detailed procedures for cleaning and disinfection of examination rooms, the waiting room, equipment and restrooms:  
<https://www.inspq.qc.ca/sites/default/files/covid/2970-nettoyage-desinfection-cliniques-medicales-covid19.pdf> (in French only).
- 6) Have a pandemics contingency plan adapted to the specific context of your workplace and see to its implementation: <https://publications.msss.gouv.qc.ca/msss/en/document-000969/>.

### **Measures concerning private practice consultation and care provision**

- 1) Perform a **telephone triage**: Ask clients with symptoms associated with COVID-19 or anyone undergoing isolation (contact of a confirmed case, returned from travel abroad or COVID-19 case) not to come to the clinic:  
<https://www.quebec.ca/en/health/health-issues/a-z/general-information-about-coronavirus/#c46469>.
- 2) **Prior to in-person consultation**
  - a) Ask the client to come to the clinic alone, to arrive on time and, if possible, to call before entering.
  - b) If a client comes to the clinic with symptoms compatible with COVID-19, ask them to leave the premises and reschedule the appointment or schedule a consultation using alternate means (e.g., teleconsultation).
- 3) **When providing in-person consultation**
  - a) **Wash your hands.**
  - b) Follow infection prevention and control measures related to the practice of your profession.
  - c) Wear personal protective equipment (PPE):
    - Wear a procedural mask: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/publications/2968-port-masque-procedure-milieux-soins-transmission-communautaire-soutenue-covid-19> (in French only);
    - Wear protective eyewear;
    - If a protective overgarment is worn, change it between each client. An overgarment does not replace the basic measures;
    - Wearing gloves is not mandatory. If gloves are used, they must be put on and taken off in accordance with a strict procedure and discarded between each client. Washing hands is necessary before and after each contact with the client.
  - d) Open and close doors yourself.
  - e) Ask the client to place their personal belongings in a designated location.
  - f) Ask the client to wash their hands.
  - g) Give the client a procedural mask.
  - h) Limit the client's movements within the clinic.
- 4) **After in-person consultation**
  - a) Ask the client to wash their hands before leaving the treatment room.
  - b) Remove personal protective equipment.
  - c) Wash your hands.
  - d) Ask the client to promptly leave the premises.

- e) Disinfect the treatment room and all surfaces touched by the client (door handle, bathroom if necessary, waiting room), and repeat this between each client.
  - If possible, air out the treatment room by opening a window to the outside. If there is no window, surface disinfection is sufficient. Airing out the room does not replace surface disinfection:
  - <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/covid-19/environnement/air-interieur-ventilation> (in French only).
- f) Disinfect the equipment used.

**5) At the end of the work shift**

- a) Remove work clothes at the end of the work shift and place them in a cloth or plastic bag. At home, bring these bags to the washer. Avoid shaking dirty clothes when placing them in the washer. Avoid all contact of your skin or clothing with the contents of the bag. The dirty clothing can, however, be washed with that of other members of the household, in hot water, with the usual laundry soap.

**SAT-COVID-19 Working Group**  
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**Note:** The preceding recommendations are based on the latest information available at the time of writing. Given that the situation and knowledge about the SARS-CoV-2 virus (COVID-19) are evolving rapidly, the recommendations in this document are subject to change.

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**TRANSLATION**

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The French version is entitled *Recommandations intérimaires concernant les soins thérapeutiques en cabinet privé (ex. : chiropraticiens, acupuncteurs, massothérapeutes, ostéopathes, etc.)* is also available on the website of the Institut national de santé publique du Québec at: <https://www.inspq.qc.ca/publications/2999-soins-cabinet-prive-covid19>

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