

## 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 within our clinical setting. Here, we identify the actions that we all 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:

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

### 1) Personal Protective Equipment

- Clean face masks are REQUIRED during intake, assessment, and anytime you are laying on your back during treatment. You do not have to wear a mask when you are lying 'face down' during the treatment. A large fabric shield will be attached to the underside of the face cradle to provide easier breathing and protection during this time.
- If you have your own mask, please bring it with you. If you do not have one, one will be provided to you. The therapist will be wearing a mask.
- More Personal Protective Equipment will be accommodated if requested. Eg. Protective Eye Wear, Face Shield, Etc.
- The therapist will wear non-latex gloves if/when appropriate.

### 2) Self-Assessment for Symptoms of Covid-19: For Patients & Therapists

Pre-Screening / Prior to Arrival

1) Before each appointment patients are **\*\*required\*\*** to complete a short 1 minute long 'Mandatory Covid-19 Screening' Questionnaire. This will be sent in an email 6 hours prior to your appointment (If you cannot find this in your Inbox, please check your Junk Mail). Please ensure the email address we have on file for you is up to date.

2) Patients must confirm:

- That they have not been outside British Columbia in the 14 days prior to an appointment.
- 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.

3) An appointment will be cancelled if the patient doesn't complete the pre-screening requirements prior to their appointment. If you are sick, you are required to cancel your appointment. No fees will be charged for late cancellations due to illness.

- Once Informed Consent has been established the treatment will proceed.

- As a part of the consent form, patients must commit to the understanding that while all possible measures to minimize risk of viral transmission have been taken, physical distancing is not possible during a Massage Therapy Treatment.
- 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.**
- 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: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/symptoms>
  - 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
- Patients who develop even mild illness or symptoms must cancel booked appointments, even without notice.
  - No fee will be charged if a cancellation is due to illness.

#### Upon Arrival

- The clinic door will be locked when you arrive. If you arrive early please wait in your car or outside the front door. You can knock or send a text message (250-307-6556) to let me know you are here.
- If you have a mask, please arrive wearing it. If you do not have a mask, one will be provided for you.
- Patients must confirm that they have completed the 'Mandatory COVID-19 Screening' that was emailed to them 6 hours prior to their appointment.
- Patient must confirm that they have not travelled outside British Columbia or have been in contact with anyone displaying illness, or signs and symptoms of Covid-19 within 14 days prior to their treatment.
- The appointment will be cancelled if the patient does not meet the pre-screening criteria above upon physical presentation at the clinic.

### 3) Physical Distancing

#### Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- Patients are asked to NOT arrive early for appointments.
- Patients must arrive unaccompanied.
  - Minors will not be treated at this time.
- Social distancing of 2 meters (6 feet) distance between you and other people is required.
- Patients must understand that during treatment social distancing is not possible. Informed consent will be provided.
- Patients are not permitted to lounge in the clinic reception area before or after the treatment.
- Nothing remains in the clinic space that cannot be disinfected after each touch.
- Appointment times are scheduled to reduce the potential of patients crossing paths, and to allow for time in-between sessions for enhanced cleaning.
- Water will be still available at the water cooler at the front desk. Please bring your own water bottle. If needed, a disposable cup is available upon request.

#### Within the Treatment Room

- It is not possible to maintain physical distancing while in the treatment room.
- Patients will be provided a clean disinfected bin to keep any personal belongings.
- When patients leave, we ask that they remove everything that they brought with them.

### 4) Hand Hygiene

#### Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- Immediately upon entering the clinic space the patient must use the hand sanitizer provided at the front door.

- 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.
- Payment occurs in the reception area. Cash will not be accepted at this time. A wireless Point of Sale system with Tap is available.
- Receipts will be emailed, not printed.

#### In 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.

#### Restroom for Patient Use

- The restroom is equipped with soap, fresh paper towels, and hand sanitizer.
- A waste bin has been placed next to the restroom door so that patients may use a paper towel to open the door, and then discard of it before re-entering the clinic space.

## 5) 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 and treatment room in order that patients and the therapist may use tissue to address an itch and/or touch the face for any other reason.
- There will be no facial massage treatments at this time.

## 6) Enhanced Cleaning

- Additional time has been scheduled between patients to allow for thorough cleaning of the treatment room.
- Visibly soiled surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected with Vitality Tek Disinfectant, a Canada Health Approved for use against Covid-19 disinfectant.
- All commonly touched surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected between patients, this includes but is not limited to:
  - Light switches, door knobs, POS machine, electronic devices, table surfaces, water cooler, desk surface, door surfaces, chairs, stools, window coverings, faucets, toilet handle/seat, etc.
  - Everything within the treatment room including the treatment table, oil bottles, table levers, face cradle, lotion bottles, etc.
  - The face cradle will be thoroughly disinfected after each treatment and left to air dry before its next use. To ensure a sufficient amount of drying time, two face cradles will be in rotation to allow for one to thoroughly dry while the other is in use.
- Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day, including the restroom.
- All linens, including blankets, pillow cases, and towels are single use only and will be laundered between each use.
- Dirty laundry is kept in a separate room from the clean laundry at all times.
- A disinfected plastic bin will be available for the patient to keep personal belongings in during the treatment. This same bin will be used by the therapist to carry used linens to the laundry room for washing.
- Bins will be disinfected between each patient before cycling back into use.
- The table heater is completely covered and sealed by a protective cover that will be disinfected between each appointment.
- No hydrotherapy supplies, or thermophores (moist heat sources) will be used.
- A Cleaning and Disinfectant for Clinic Setting Poster will be on Display in the reception area for reference.

## 6) 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. All

reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room have been implemented.

- 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.
- 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 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.

#### Asymptomatic Spreaders

- Asymptomatic transmission of the coronavirus is an unavoidable risk of practice until we've acquired herd immunity, there is an effective treatment or vaccine against Covid-19.
- We have put into place protocols to help mitigate that risk as outlined in the preceding 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.

## 7) Informed Consent

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

- The nature of 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.
- At every appointment, the informed Consent process will be documented by the RMT prior to treatment.