

Reasons to Feel Thankful During COVID-19

We are all tired of COVID-19 and the restrictions that we have been living with for almost one year now. The newspapers, radio and television are full of doom and gloom, blaming and generally negative messages. But there is a good side. All our diligence and adherence to the public health guidelines has paid off, we are now slowly but cautiously opening up in our area. We can now enjoy more freedom.

We have and have had a much lower infection rate than the rest of the province, less sickness, fewer hospitalizations and deaths.

We live in a beautiful area and have access to uncrowded trails and parks where we can walk, exercise and enjoy the outdoors.

As part of the Provincial strategy for vaccine rollout, all of our vulnerable local Long Term Care residents have now successfully been offered and received the first dose of their two-part COVID vaccination. In addition, many of the LTC staff have also received their first dose as part of the plan to protect our most vulnerable residents.

Although it seems like we are far behind in the quest to vaccinate our population, we are actually on schedule, as the Moderna and Pfizer vaccines were released and approved faster than expected. When the contracts were signed in the summer, it was anticipated they would not be released until March 2021.

There are now 2 vaccines available and several more are close to approval.

Vaccines are on the way; we are expecting over 400,000 doses per week for the end of February and 440,00 doses per week for the first two weeks in March of the Pfizer vaccine. Moderna will also be shipping close to 2 million vaccines in the next 2 months. The vaccines are much more effective than we were hoping for, the original target was an efficacy of over 50% and we are looking at 70-95%. Studies show that the Pfizer vaccine is 90 % effective for severe disease 14 days after initial dose and increases to 95 % efficacy 14 days after second dose. It has now been tested against all variants of concern currently in Canada - and has been found to be highly effective even after a single dose and second dose should provide longer lasting immunity. Also just released that early evidence suggests that the Pfizer vaccine is also reducing viral load - so that even if you do contract COVID after being vaccinated, you are unlikely to get sick and much less likely to transmit the virus to other people.

We know it is difficult, but please continue to be diligent and adhere to public health measures. Wear a proper fitting mask, wash your hands, social distance and follow our public health guidelines.

Keep up the good work! Stay Safe, Stay Local