

## **Collin McTaggart Massage Therapy**

### **COVID-19 Protocols**

The following document is written with the goal of reducing the risk of exposure to COVID-19 for both patients and the practitioner.

Health experts believe that Coronavirus is transmitted via liquid droplets when a person coughs, sneezes or talks within a close proximity.

- It is believed that COVID-19 spreads when infected droplets reach the eyes, nose or mouth.
- The virus is not known to be transmitted through airborne transmission (by much smaller evaporated particles containing the microorganism floating in the air for long periods of time).
- Coronavirus does not transmit through the skin.
- The virus can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough.
- Be aware that COVID-19 may be spread by those not showing symptoms.

For measures on prevention see [BCCDC's Prevention & Risks](#)  
Or for a brief summary see: [BCCDC's COVID-19 Prevention Poster](#)

### **Therapist Screening**

Each day on arriving to work the therapist will fill out a form listing any potential symptoms they may be experiencing that pertain to COVID-19. This form will be on display for patients to view upon entering the waiting room if they wish to see it. This self assessment can be referenced by using [BC's Self-Assessment Tool](#).

If the therapist has contracted COVID-19, they will stay away from work for at least 10 days beyond the onset of symptoms, the fever is gone without medication, they are feeling better, and they have been cleared by a public health official as stated in the [BCCDC's guide on self isolation](#).

If the therapist has knowingly been exposed to COVID-19 by a close contact, they will cancel all upcoming appointments and will only return to work when:

- Their close contact has been tested and the results for COVID-19 come back negative and they are well.
- OR after self-isolating for 14 days and having no symptoms or fever develop.
- OR being cleared by a public health official.

### **Patient Screening**

Careful screening of all visitors to the clinic is important for the safety of the clinic, staff, and patients.

Entering the clinic will have strict guidelines, and it is greatly appreciated they are respected and followed accordingly.

From the time you book your appointment to the time you arrive, you will be screened in three ways:

1. The day before your appointment
2. When you arrive to the clinic for your appointment
3. When you first enter the treatment room

The following questions will be asked at each of these steps:

1. Are you experiencing any of the following: a fever, a new cough, a worsening chronic cough, shortness of breath or difficulty breathing?
2. Have you had close contact with anyone with acute respiratory illness or have you travelled outside of Canada in the past 14 days?
3. Do you have a confirmed case of COVID-19 or had close contact with a confirmed case of COVID-19?
4. Do you have 2 or more of the following symptoms: Sore throat, runny nose/sneezing, nasal congestion, hoarse voice, difficulty swallowing, decrease or loss of sense of smell, chills, headaches, unexplained fatigue/malaise, diarrhea, abdominal pain, or nausea/vomiting?
5. If you are over 65 years of age, are you experiencing any of the following: delirium, falls, acute functional decline, or worsening of chronic conditions?

If you answer yes to any of these questions, you cannot have a treatment and will be directed to call 811, go to <https://bc.thrive.health/>, or to contact your physician for further guidance and advice. You can reschedule after you have been cleared to be treated.

### **Arrival At Clinic and Instructions**

When arriving at the clinic, it is preferred you wait outside for the therapist to open the door for you. Stand at the top of the stairs and you will be let in. On days that the weather permits, the window that is next to the entrance will be open in order to announce your presence. You may also wait in your vehicle and send a text message to the therapist announcing your arrival.

Physical distancing protocols must be maintained in the entranceway as well as in the waiting room.

Only one person is permitted to be in the office. Family and friends are not welcome to enter the building at this time. Exceptions will only be made for minors who have an appointment and would like a parent/guardian in the treatment room with them.

Masks are **required**. If you are uncomfortable wearing a mask in the clinic, you will be asked to reschedule your appointment to a time when not wearing a mask is once again safe for both parties. Both clinic and fabric masks are okay, but they must cover your nose and mouth.

On entry to the clinic, you will immediately walk to the bathroom to wash your hands using the protocols set forth by [this COVID-19 Handwashing Poster](#). From the bathroom you will walk directly into the treatment room.

On entering the treatment room, the therapist will hand you a form to fill out asking the questions mentioned in the previous section of this document. The form will be held in a sanitized picture frame, and you will be given a sanitized dry erase marker to fill it out. A photo will be taken of the form and uploaded to your online chart.

Social distancing will not be able to be maintained during treatment.

A sanitized plastic bin will be available to place your clothing and belongings into.

The therapist will close the treatment room door for you in order to reduce the amount of objects you touch in the clinic. Once the treatment is finished and you are dressed, touching the door to open it will be permitted. You will do so by using a tissue to minimize contact with the doorknob. Tissues will be placed next to the door.

Doors and doorknobs will be sanitized between every appointment.

### **Avoiding Face Touching**

- COVID-19 can be transmitted by touch if droplets are on the hand when it touches the face, mouth, nose or eyes.
- Tissue will be available throughout the clinic to allow the patient and therapist to use in the event that they have an itch or they need to touch their face for any reason.
- The therapist will wear a mask all times. If requested by the patient, the therapist will also wear safety goggles.
- Intraoral and external TMJ treatments will not be conducted at this time.
- Musculature of the face will not be palpated or treated at this time.

### **Cleaning**

- Additional time has been scheduled between patients to allow for thorough cleaning of the treatment room.
- Rubber gloves will be used and sanitized before and after every use.
- Visibly soiled surfaces will be cleaned followed by disinfection with a Canada Health Approved product for use against COVID-19 disinfectant as listed [here](#).
- Common areas will be cleaned and disinfected at least twice a day.
- The bathroom will be disinfected between appointments.
- All high touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected between patients, regardless of appearances. High touch surfaces include (but are not limited to):

- Light switches, door knobs, electronic devices, table surfaces, chairs, stools, faucets, etc.
- The treatment table, table levers, face cradle, lotion bottles will be sanitized immediately after each treatment.
- No hydrotherapy supplies, thermophores, table warmers or covers will be used.
- All linens, including blankets and pillow cases are single use only and will be laundered using high heat and soap between each use.
- A disinfected single-use plastic bin has been placed in the treatment room. The patient will be asked to keep all of their personal belongings in this bin during the treatment.
- Bins will be disinfected between each patient before cycling back into use.
- A sealable plastic bin will be used to keep soiled laundry in and will be sanitized when leaving and reentering the clinic.

### **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 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.

### **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.

### **Informed Consent**

- Any 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.
- The RMT will document the patient's consent in advance and at every treatment.

*Please note this document may be updated and/or changed in the future for clarification or in the event that protocols need to be changed or updated.*