

# Public Health Update from Southwestern Public Health



For Health Care Providers in Oxford County, Elgin County, and the City of St. Thomas

May 2, 2023

An Update from Dr. Ninh Tran, Medical Officer of Health at Southwestern Public Health

## Public Health: What You Need to Know

### CHANGES TO LYME DISEASE TESTING

- As of April 1, the PHO lab updated its testing algorithm for Lyme disease. Review the [clinical guidance document](#) for full details. Resources:
  - Public Health Ontario online Lyme disease resources, including risk areas ([link](#)).
  - Public Health Ontario Lab online Lyme disease investigation tool kit and test information sheet ([link](#)).
  - Contact Public Health Ontario Lab if any technical questions arise [customerservicecentre@oahpp.ca](mailto:customerservicecentre@oahpp.ca) or 416-235-6556.

### MULTI-DRUG RESISTANT GONORRHEA GUIDANCE

- In April, the [CMOH issued a memo](#) regarding multi-drug resistant gonorrhea infection guidance. For all patients with suspected gonorrhea infection:
  - Specimen Collection Guidance:
    - Collect swabs for *N. gonorrhoeae* culture **as well as** specimens for NAAT testing from all potentially exposed sites (e.g., urethral/cervical, pharyngeal, rectal).
    - Swabs should be received within 48 hours if possible, but will be accepted by PHOL up to 72 hours after collection. View [PHO test information index](#) for full details.
  - Test of Cure Guidance:
    - Per the [Canadian Guidelines on Sexually Transmitted Infections](#), test of cure is recommended for **ALL** positive cases at **ALL** positive sites.
    - Perform culture 3-7 days after completion of treatment.
    - If culture is not available, test of cure by NAAT is accepted and to be performed 2-3 weeks post-treatment. Contact PHO for questions at 1-877-604-4567 or [customerservicecentre@oahpp.ca](mailto:customerservicecentre@oahpp.ca).
- If multi-drug resistant gonorrhea infection is detected**, contact Public Health for case management.

### CHANGES TO HIV TESTING GUIDANCE

- The new Ontario Guidelines for Providers Offering HIV Testing (2023) recommend streamlined testing and counselling for people at risk of HIV infection, a stronger focus on identifying symptoms of acute and chronic HIV, and routine testing for members of populations with higher rates of HIV.
- The guidelines also reduce the current window period for definitive diagnosis of HIV from 3 months to 6 weeks.
- View the full guidance here ([link](#)).

Southwestern Public Health  
[www.swpublichealth.ca](http://www.swpublichealth.ca)  
1-800-922-0096



## NO-COST SUPPORT FOR PATIENTS WITH YOUNG CHILDREN

- Watch this video to virtually meet members of our team who offer support to parents and caregivers of young children in the community. [Click here to watch.](#)

## FIND A REGISTERED DIETITIAN

- Clients/patients can access a list of Registered Dietitians in Elgin County, Oxford County, and the City of St. Thomas here ([link](#))

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