



**Dr. Noel Gibney**  
**Co-Chair Strategic COVID-19 Pandemic Committee**  
[ngibney@ualberta.ca](mailto:ngibney@ualberta.ca)  
**780-937-6430**

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### **Start Following New Public Health COVID-19 Restrictions Now**

**Edmonton, AB:** New public health restrictions were announced December 8<sup>th</sup> by the Provincial Government. The Strategic COVID-19 Pandemic Committee recommends our communities and neighbours start the public health restrictions now and not wait until December 13<sup>th</sup>.

#### **Thank You**

First, the Committee would like to thank the Government of Alberta for taking the necessary steps to protect our community with more public health restrictions. We know there are no easy answers as we as a society battle the COVID-19 virus. We appreciate the effort of everyone in our community for all the actions you take to keep each other safe. We recognize the hardship Albertans are facing with this virus and thank everyone for their efforts to stop the spread. We would also like to thank Mayor Don Iveson and Edmonton City Council for their unanimous support and leadership in voting for increased restrictions in Edmonton.

#### **Start Now**

We encourage everyone to begin now and not wait until December 13<sup>th</sup>. Waiting a few days costs lives. In the first wave of the United States 56.5% of reported infections and 55% of reported deaths as of May 3, 2020 could have been avoided if the same control measures had been implemented just one week earlier. We do not have to wait for government instruction to make decisions that keep us safe.

We agree with the restrictions announced and encourage Albertans to go beyond the restrictions where possible. Please consider keeping congregations safe by moving faith services online. Please choose to order online or do curbside pick-up from retail stores. Please also remember if you are presenting symptoms to book a COVID-19 test and stay home. This is an everyone effort and the next four weeks are extremely critical to our collective health and wellbeing.

#### **Holiday Season**

We recognize the huge sacrifice everyone is making to not have families gather for the holidays. We know COVID-19 loves gatherings as Thanksgiving demonstrated the risk of spread. We appreciate our community not getting together for the holidays and waiting until the virus is under control and restrictions are lifted to celebrate.

#### **About the Committee**

Co-Chairs Dr. James Talbot and Dr. Noel Gibney lead the Committee of medical specialties most affected by COVID-19; public health, intensive care, emergency medicine, family medicine, laboratory medicine, infectious diseases, general internal medicine, psychiatry, paediatrics, and geriatrics to provide the comprehensive expertise needed to respond to this pandemic. The Committee will fulfil the following responsibilities for a COVID-19 response on behalf of the Edmonton zone medical community: 1) monitor public health, the health system, and the government response in Alberta; 2) research and recommend medical guidance; and 3) provide public information and medical advice to Albertans.

**About EZMSA:** The EZMSA represents 1,700 doctors for local issues in the Edmonton Zone.

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