



**Winnipeg, March 13, 2020**

Although the World Health Organization (WHO) has declared the coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak a pandemic, Manitoba and the rest of Canada still have relatively few confirmed cases. For the moment the risk of contagion is relatively low. Current epidemiological evidence indicates that person-to-person transmission of COVID-19 occurs through:

- respiratory droplets generated when an infected person coughs or sneezes;
- close, prolonged personal contact, such as touching or shaking hands;
- touching something with the virus on it, and then touching your eyes, mouth, or nose before washing your hands.

Lifesaving Society Manitoba understands that members of the public may be concerned about transmission of COVID-19 in aquatic centres. According to the Centers for Disease Control, "There is no evidence that COVID-19 can be spread to humans through the use of pools and hot tubs. Proper operation, maintenance, and disinfection (e.g., with chlorine and bromine) of pools and hot tubs should remove or inactivate the virus that causes COVID-19." The Society advises all pool operators to ensure they follow Manitoba Public Health guidelines and regulations regarding disinfection of swimming pools in order to limit the spread of viruses or other communicable diseases, and to protect bathers.

Further, all Affiliates, Instructors and Trainers are advised to:

- Be diligent in following public health recommendations about practicing safe personal hygiene (regular hand washing with soap and water, not touching your face, etc.), and urging participants in your courses to do likewise.
- Avoid contact with sick people and stay home if you are ill. Discourage participation by anyone who is not feeling well. Be prepared to self-isolate if you, or members of your household, become ill.
- Monitor the Public Health Agency of Canada website (<https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/diseases/coronavirus-disease-covid-19.html>) and the Manitoba Health website (<http://www.manitoba.ca/health/coronavirus/index.html>) for updates.

Lifesaving Society Manitoba reminds everyone about the following hygiene practices that will help limit the transmission of any diseases in aquatic facilities:

- Wash your hand frequently using water and soap for at least 20 seconds, especially after going to the bathroom and before handling food (use a 60% alcohol-based hand sanitizer if you do not have access to soap and water);



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- When you cough or sneeze, cover your mouth and nose with a tissue or your bent elbow, rather than your hand, immediately dispose of the used tissue in garbage with a plastic bag and then wash your hands;
- Avoid touching eyes, nose and mouth without having previously washed your hands;
- Regularly wash surfaces that are frequently touched (toilets, phones, reception desk, credit and debit card terminals, door handles, lockers, turnstiles, etc.) with a regular household cleaner or a mild bleach solution (one part of household bleach for nine parts of water);
- Clean regularly your electronic devices such as computers, keyboards and mice, pads and especially your cellphones. Follow the manufacturer's directions to avoid any damage.

Lifesaving Society Manitoba also reminds all Affiliates, Instructors and Trainers that they must be diligent about following standard hygiene protocols for resuscitation training courses, and the decontamination, transport and storage of training manikins and other first aid equipment used by participants. These practices help reduce the risk of contracting or passing on an infection. Specifically, when practising resuscitation skills and CPR using a manikin candidates and instructors should:

- Not chew gum or eat;
- Not participate in ventilation if they have a respiratory infection (cold, flu, coronavirus, etc.), or if they have open sores on their hands or mouth;
- Not wear lipstick;
- Wash their hands before and after working on manikins.

If candidates or instructors need to share a manikin with someone else during the training, these additional steps are necessary:

1. Dry the face of the manikin with a gauze pad;
2. Wipe the face of the manikin with a disinfecting solution and scrub inside the manikin's mouth;
3. Allow the solution to work for 30 seconds before passing the manikin to the other person.

All Lifesaving Society Instructors must also make sure that candidates participating in a course or a recertification have access to pocket masks and other approved barrier devices. Lifesaving Society Manitoba is monitoring the spread of COVID-19 to ensure the safety of our members, as well as aquatic facility staff and patrons. We will continue to monitor public health advisories and notify you of any changes.