

Plan for Return to Clinical Practice in Respect of COVID-19

This plan was developed with the goal of reducing the risk of exposure to the virus that causes COVID-19 for both patients and the practitioner within our clinical setting. Here, we identify the actions that the therapist at Clayton Heights Chiropractic commits to, and that all visiting patients must commit to, in order to resume receiving massage therapy services.

“Coronavirus is transmitted via liquid droplets when a person coughs or sneezes. The virus can enter via these droplets through the eyes, nose or throat if you are in close contact.

It can be spread by touch if a person has used their hands to cover their mouth or nose when they cough. That’s why we recommend you cough or sneeze into your arm and wash your hands regularly.”

Source: <http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/about-covid-19/how-it-spreads>

The overall aim of these protocols is to reduce potential coronavirus transmission by:

- Required ongoing self-assessment for signs of COVID-19 related illness in both the patient and the therapist
- Reducing all physical, non-treatment related interactions amongst all people within the practice environment
- Hand hygiene requirements
- Avoiding face touching
- Enhanced cleaning protocols
- Appropriate use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
- Meeting professional obligations, particularly related to informed consent and liability insurance

Self-Assessment for Symptoms of COVID-19: For Patients & Therapists

Pre-Screening / Prior to Arrival

- Patients are asked to do a self-assessment of their symptoms before coming to the clinic for their appointment. If you are feeling unwell in any way, please call to reschedule – you will not be charged a late cancellation fee.
- Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses and seasonal allergies. An appointment must be cancelled immediately if either the patient or the therapist presents with even mild symptoms that may be signs of COVID-19 including:
 - Fever
 - Dry cough
 - Chills
 - Shortness of breath
 - Sore throat or pain with swallowing
 - Stuffy or runny nose
 - Loss of taste or smell
- COVID-19 Symptoms may range from mild to severe. **Patients are required to cancel appointments if they experience what they determine to be ‘just feeling under the weather,’ on the day of their appointment.**
- Patients will be required to sign an additional consent form at their first appointment since COVID. As a part of the consent form, patients must commit to understanding that while we’ve taken all possible measures to minimize risk of viral transmission, the nature of massage therapy means that physical distancing is not possible in the treatment room and a risk of viral transmission does exist.
- Patients who develop even mild illness or symptoms must cancel booked appointments, even without notice.
 - They will not be charged a late cancellation fee if they cancel due to illness.

Upon Arrival

- Upon entering the clinic, patients must wash their hands at the sanitizing station.

Physical Distancing

Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- The therapist and the patient will both maintain a space of 2 meters (6 feet) distance between each other in all clinic areas that are outside the treatment room.
- Water is available upon request.

- Nothing remains in the clinic space that cannot be disinfected after each touch.
- Appointment times are scheduled to reduce the potential of patients crossing paths, and to allow for time in-between sessions for enhanced cleaning.
- Patients are asked to arrive on time and not early or late for appointments.

Within the Treatment Room

- The therapist is the only other person who will be in the treatment room throughout the duration of the patient's appointment. Patients are asked to avoid bringing others into the room whenever possible.
 - Exceptions will be made for minors who wish for a guardian to be present or patients who require a caregiver or translator.
- The therapist will open the door for the patient and the patient can take a seat in the chair in the treatment room. The therapist will stand distanced to do the interview.
- The therapist will wash their hands at the sink in the treatment room prior to any treatment.
- Patients will be asked to remove from the clinic everything that they bring with them.

Hand Hygiene

Reception Area / Entry into Clinic Space

- Immediately upon entering the clinic space the patient must sanitize their hands at the sanitizing station.
- The therapist will wash hands thoroughly for at least 20 seconds between patients, before and after disinfecting spaces, and before donning or doffing other PPE like face masks.
- Payment occurs in the reception area. We prefer credit card payments instead of cash at this time.

In the Treatment Room

- The therapist will open the door to the treatment room and allow the patient to enter.
 - The door and door knobs will be disinfected between each patient.
- The patient **MUST** wear their mask for the entirety of their treatment. This includes all times that the patient is **BOTH** face up and face down.

Enhanced Cleaning

- Additional time has been scheduled between patients to allow for thorough cleaning of the treatment room.
- All high touch surfaces will be cleaned and disinfected between patients, regardless of appearances. High touch surfaces include (but are not limited to):
 - The treatment table, table levers, face cradle, lotion bottles will be disinfected immediately after each treatment.
- All linens, including blankets and pillowcases are single use only and will be laundered using high heat and detergent between each use.

Personal Protective Equipment

- The therapist will don a face mask. Patients are required to bring and wear their own face mask to their appointment.
 - If patients have their own fabric face mask, they are required to clean it prior to use, and to arrive at the clinic wearing it, and remain wearing it for the duration of their time in the clinic.

Avoid Face Touching

- While in the clinic, patients are asked to avoid touching their face. If a patient must touch their face, for example to address an itch, please use one of the available tissues to do so.

Professional Obligations

Liability Insurance

- The therapist carries professional liability insurance through LMI Canada Insurance.
- The therapist is following all the health and safety guidelines outlined by the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia and the Provincial Health Officer and that they are taking all reasonable precautions to clean and disinfect the clinic and all the surfaces within the treatment room.

- No guarantees have been made by the therapist that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment.

Regarding Testing Positive

- Both patients and the therapist are expected to follow the BCCDC guidelines if they test positive, come into contact with someone who tested positive, or are feeling unwell in any way.

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.
- No guarantees have been made by the therapist that the patient may not come in contact with COVID-19 at or during an appointment.

Informed Consent

In the current environment of COVID-19 risk, informed consent requires that the patient be informed and understands that:

- 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 at every treatment.