

Health and Safety Protocols During the COVID-19 Pandemic

Registered Massage Therapy at Mothering Touch

updated May 2, 2021

These protocols follow the guidance provided by the College of Massage Therapists of British Columbia (CMTBC). They are in line with the principles set out by British Columbia's Provincial Health Officer and by WorkSafeBC. They refer to information provided by the BC Ministry of Health, BC Centre for Disease Control (BCCDC), and HealthLink BC.

These protocols will be followed by all Registered Massage Therapists (RMTs/therapists) practicing at Mothering Touch until guidance from the above-mentioned bodies is updated. At that time these protocols may be adjusted to remain in line with the new guidance.

General

- This plan applies only to massage therapy at Mothering Touch (975 Fort Street, Victoria BC) and represents the minimum level of safety protocols being followed by RMTs.
- RMTs are taking reasonable but thorough measures to minimize the risk of viral transmission. However, physical distancing is impossible to maintain during massage therapy treatments and therefore this risk cannot be reduced to zero. RMTs will ensure that you understand the risks and benefits of proceeding with treatment and will also ensure that treatment is in your best interests. Your voluntary informed consent is always required before massage therapy treatment proceeds.

Screening for Symptoms and Risk Factors

- Only pre-screened, healthy individuals are permitted into the treatment room. Until further notice and to ensure honesty when completing the self-assessment, the cancellation policy is relaxed when cancellation is due to reasons associated with COVID-19.
- At the time of booking you will be directed to the BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool. In order for your appointment to proceed you must confirm that you and your close contacts are healthy, that none of you have a confirmed or potential case of COVID-19, that none of you are waiting for a COVID-19 test result, that none of you are currently self-isolating due to potential exposure to the virus, and that none of you will have travelled away from your home community on Vancouver Island during the 14 days prior to the date of your appointment (if anyone has travelled recently, we will discuss whether or not it is safe for your appointment to proceed).
- If at any time you begin to experience symptoms consistent with COVID-19 (including fever, chills, new cough or worsening of chronic cough, shortness of breath, difficulty breathing, sore throat, loss of sense of smell or taste, headache or body aches, fatigue, loss of appetite, nausea and vomiting, diarrhea), please complete the BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool or call 8-1-1 and follow the instructions of public health staff. If you have an upcoming appointment, please contact your RMT and discuss your symptom(s) and the advice given to you by public health.
- Two days before your first appointment with an RMT, your RMT will contact you so that you can ask any questions you have about proceeding with massage therapy during the COVID-19 pandemic. You will receive the RMT's contact information, an intake form, and a mandatory COVID-19 screening questionnaire. With all follow up appointments you will also receive mandatory COVID-19 screening questionnaires; these screening questionnaires must be completed no later than 24 hours before each appointment. Your therapist will call you with any questions or concerns about your responses and/or to remind you to complete the forms.
- You will be asked to confirm your good health and that of your close contacts when you arrive for your appointment. RMTs reserve the right to postpone and reschedule your appointment if your health or the health of any of your close contacts may be compromised.

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- If you are a health care worker treating patients with COVID-19, please complete the BC Health Care Worker Exposures Risk Assessment Tool. If you fall in the no risk or low risk categories and are healthy then you may proceed with treatment; those in the low risk category must wear a surgical mask at all times while inside Mothering Touch.
- RMTs will use the BC COVID-19 Symptom Self-Assessment Tool and document the results on work days. If anyone in an RMT's household begins to experience symptoms that could be caused by COVID-19, that RMT will immediately self-isolate and call 8-1-1 for instructions.
- If you become sick within 14 days following an appointment with an RMT or allege that you caught COVID-19 from an RMT, that RMT will immediately self-isolate and call 8-1-1. All RMTs at Mothering Touch will then follow public health's directions for self-isolation, contacting recently seen patients, and cancelling upcoming appointments.

Physical Distancing and Ventilation

- Please attend your appointment alone and arrive only a few minutes early (exceptions may be discussed with your RMT at the time of booking). Please adhere to the limit for the number of people permitted inside Mothering Touch when arriving/departing. When physical distancing is not possible inside the treatment room, mask use will be required as described below.
- The circulation fan for the HVAC system at Mothering Touch is left on at all times and the door to the treatment room will be left open as often as is practical to improve ventilation.

Hand Hygiene and Face Touching Avoidance

- When you enter Mothering Touch, please clean your hands by using the hand sanitizer provided or by washing with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. Please clean your hands again before you leave Mothering Touch. Your RMT will open and close the treatment room door for you.
- As is standard practice, RMTs will wash their hands, wrists, and forearms immediately before and after treatment. Additionally, RMTs will clean their hands frequently throughout the day, particularly after handling used linens, cleaning the treatment room, or doing personal activities such as eating.
- If someone uses their hand(s) to cover a cough or sneeze, it is possible to spread the virus that causes COVID-19 by touch. Use a clean cloth or tissue to touch your face if necessary (i.e. to address an itch) and sneeze into a clean cloth or tissue or the crease of your elbow. Immediately wash your hands with soap and water. Tissues and hand sanitizer will be available for your use.

Enhanced Cleaning

- Equipment, supplies, and touch surfaces in direct contact with patients will be cleaned and disinfected after each treatment. Equipment, supplies, and touch surfaces used solely by the RMT will be cleaned and sanitized after each treatment. Cleaning protocols are available separately.
- RMTs launder their own linens and are following enhanced protocols. All linens (including blankets) are single use, and are laundered in hot soapy water.
- Items in direct contact with patients that cannot be laundered in hot water or disinfected after each treatment will not be used.

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Personal Protective Equipment

- Masks that cover the nose and mouth help to contain respiratory droplets. These are designed to help protect other people near the wearer by minimizing the spread of these respiratory droplets.
- Current public health expectations are that everyone who is able to wear a mask will wear one in shared indoor spaces. Please wear a mask when you enter Mothering Touch and keep it on for the entire time that you are there. Please clean your hands before and after touching your face mask and avoid touching it while you are wearing it. If you are exempt from wearing a mask under the current public health orders in British Columbia, please speak to your RMT about this ahead of time to determine whether or not, or in what way, it may be safe for your appointment to proceed.