



# Fighting Blindness Canada

## COVID-19 and Your Eye Health

COVID-19 has presented uncertainties for everyone, especially those living with vision loss. To support the vision loss community, Fighting Blindness Canada (FBC) has prepared a [variety of resources](#) and answers to common questions about eye health during COVID-19.

This information is not intended to replace medical advice. Patients are advised to contact their eye care provider if they have concerns about their eye health.

## Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

### **How will COVID-19 affect my routine eye exam?**

Currently, many eye exams and appointments are being delayed or temporarily cancelled to protect the health and safety of patients. As the government eases some restrictions on services, you may receive a call from your doctor's office to reschedule your appointment. Please be patient as there may be many appointments to reschedule.

### **Will cancelling my appointment affect my eyesight?**

Your doctor does not want you to lose vision while you are waiting for your next appointment. If you develop any new or worsening symptoms, please call your doctor. If your doctor's office is unable to address your concerns, consider going to the emergency room. It is important you keep track of your eye health and notify your doctor of any sudden changes.

### **My eye appointment has been rescheduled, but I am nervous to visit the clinic. What can I expect?**

If you are scheduled for an in-person appointment, it means the clinic is ready to open and is complying with the guidelines for opening safely. These guidelines have been developed to ensure your safety and the safety of others in the clinic. Contact your doctor's office to find out what is required by you during your appointment. To learn more about what you may experience when you go to your appointment, [watch FBC's View Point webinar with Dr. Choudry on eye care during Covid-19](#).

### **What if I have an eye emergency?**

Follow the same protocols as a health emergency. Call your doctor's office to schedule an emergency appointment. Call 911 or go to your nearest emergency room if you have an emergency and cannot wait to see your eye doctor.

# COVID-19 and Your Eye Health FAQs continued.

## **If I get COVID-19, will my eyesight be affected?**

COVID-19 is a form of coronavirus that causes respiratory symptoms ([access detailed symptom information](#)). Several cases of conjunctivitis (pink eye) have been reported.

NOTE: If you are experiencing any symptoms relating to COVID-19, call your local public health authority. If you experience any symptoms of sight loss, call your eye doctor.

## **What can I do to protect my eyesight during this time?**

- Follow the guidelines from Health Canada to protect yourself and others.
- If you require eye drops, wash your hands for at least 20 seconds before administering.
- If you are taking medication for your eyes, make sure you have enough medication to last a 14-day period of isolation.
- If you wear contact lenses, try to use glasses for a little while. Contact lens wearers tend to touch their eyes more often, which can contribute to the risk of contracting COVID-19.

## **What if I am participating in a clinical trial? Is it still running?**

Many clinical trials have been put on pause due to COVID-19. If you are currently participating in a clinical trial and you have not received information about the status, reach out to your trial coordinator. If you have signed up for a clinical trial but have not yet started your treatment, it is possible your start date may be delayed. Check with your coordinator to find out more.

## **What if I get sick and need assistance?**

The recommendation from Health Canada is if you become sick with COVID-19 but are not critically ill, stay home and self-isolate until your symptoms are completely gone. Additionally, call your local public health authority or doctor's office to find out what to do. There's also an [online assessment tool](#) to help guide you to the appropriate resources. Leave home only if you need medical attention. If medical attention is needed, do not use public transportation, call a taxi or your local public health to find out how to get to a medical centre. Some accessibility services will be affected in the next few months. [Access COVID-19 Health Canada Updates](#).

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**If you are struggling, reach out to family and friends, or call your local public health authority. Also, we have [tips on protecting mental health during COVID-19](#).**



Fighting Blindness Canada's Health Information Line is also here to help.  
Call **1.888.626.2995** or email [healthinfo@fightingblindness.ca](mailto:healthinfo@fightingblindness.ca).

*For info on the status of COVID-19 in Canada, please refer to federal, provincial, and local government websites.*