

COVID-19 tests coming to pharmacies Friday as Ontario reports 335 new cases

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Testing for people without symptoms initially available at 60 pharmacies, mostly in urban centres

By [kawarthaNOW](#) -
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Ontario Premier Doug Ford, accompanied by health minister Christine Elliott and Shoppers Drug Mart president Jeff Leger, at a media conference on September 23, 2020 at Shoppers Drug Mart in Huntsville, where he announced COVID-19 tests for people without symptoms will be available at 60 pharmacies in Ontario. (CPAC screenshot)

As many as 60 pharmacies in Ontario will provide COVID-19 testing beginning Friday (September 25) as the province reported 335 new cases today, the lowest daily increase since September 16.

Premier Doug Ford made the announcement on Wednesday (September 23) at a media

conference at Shoppers Drug Mart in Huntsville, where he was accompanied by health minister Christine Elliott, Shoppers Drug Mart president Jeff Leger, Huntsville mayor Karin Terziano, Parry Sound-Muskoka MPP Norm Miller, Parry Sound-Muskoka MP Scott Aitchison, and Natalie Bubela, chief executive officer of Muskoka Algonquin Healthcare.

“We need to make it easier to get a COVID test, as it is for a flu shot,” Ford said. “Here in Huntsville, this location will take some pressure off the local assessment centre, in addition to working with our partners to increase the number of testing locations.”

The testing will be available by appointment only for people without symptoms. With the exception of Huntsville, most of the 60 pharmacies to provide testing are located in the three regions of the province with the highest number of cases. Testing will be available on Friday at selected Shoppers Drug Mart, Rexall, and independent pharmacies in Toronto, North York, Markham, East York, Scarborough, Weston, Etobicoke, Mississauga, Brampton, Ottawa, Kanata, Nepean, and Huntsville. The province says further locations will be added in the coming weeks.

Ford also announced three hospitals in Toronto — Mount Sinai Hospital, Women’s College Hospital, and University Health Network — will begin offering the less-intrusive saliva-based COVID-19 test, while the Ontario government waits for Health Canada to approve the test for widespread use.

“Health Canada, we need your help,” Ford said. “All I’m hearing is crickets from Health Canada right now on the saliva test. These types of tests make it easier to test people, especially kids.”

Of the 335 new cases in Ontario, the majority are in Toronto (102), Peel (79), and Ottawa (65), with smaller increases in York (30), Halton (15), Waterloo (13), and Simcoe Muskoka (9). The remaining 27 public health units are reporting 5 or fewer cases, with 19 reporting no new cases. Of today’s cases, 69% are among people under the age of 40.

There have been 3 new deaths, and hospitalizations have increased by 6 to 88. The backlog of tests under investigation has increased by 8,291 to 48,079. There are 42 cases in Ontario schools, with 21 student cases, 5 staff cases, and 16 cases among people who are not identified. In licensed child care settings, there are 35 confirmed cases, with 5 child cases and 8 staff cases.

In the greater Kawartha region, there are no new cases to report in Prince Edward and Hastings counties. Reports for Peterborough, Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland, and Haliburton will be released later this afternoon; this story will be updated when those reports are available.

Since the pandemic began in the greater Kawartha region, there have been 111 confirmed

positive cases in the Peterborough area (103 resolved with 2 deaths), 178 in the City of Kawartha Lakes (159 resolved with 32 deaths), 41 in Northumberland County (34 resolved with 1 death), 15 in Haliburton County (15 resolved with no deaths), and 52 in Hastings County and Prince Edward County (47 resolved with 5 deaths). The most recent death was reported in Northumberland on September 8.

Province-wide, there have been 48,087 confirmed cases, an increase of 335 from yesterday, with 41,600 (86.5% of all cases) resolved, an increase of 258. There have been 2,832 deaths, an increase of 3 from yesterday, with 1,830 deaths reported in long-term care homes, an increase of 2 from yesterday. A total of 3,649,980 tests have been completed, an increase of 35,436 from yesterday, with 48,079 tests under investigation, an increase of 8,291 from yesterday.

This report is based on data supplied by the province's integrated Public Health Information System (iPHIS), as well as any additional information supplied by health units. This information is at least 24 hours old, so it is not real-time data. Note that each health unit reports the information in a different way.

Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit

The Haliburton, Kawartha, Pine Ridge District Health Unit's service area is the City of Kawartha Lakes, Northumberland County, and Haliburton County.

The health unit provides reports on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, excluding statutory holidays. These numbers are from September 21 and will be updated when the health unit issues its report later this afternoon.

Confirmed positive: 234, including 178 in Kawartha Lakes, 41 in Northumberland, 15 in Haliburton (no change)

Probable cases: 0 (no change)

Hospitalizations (total to date): 15 (no change)

Deaths: 33 (no change)

Resolved: 208, including 159 in Kawartha Lakes, 34 in Northumberland, 15 in Haliburton (no change)

Active cases: 6 in Northumberland (no change)

Institutional outbreaks: None (no change)

Province of Ontario

Confirmed positive: 48,087 (increase of 335)

Resolved: 41,600 (increase of 258, 86.5% of all cases)

Hospitalized: 88 (increase of 6)

Hospitalized and in ICU: 24 (no change)

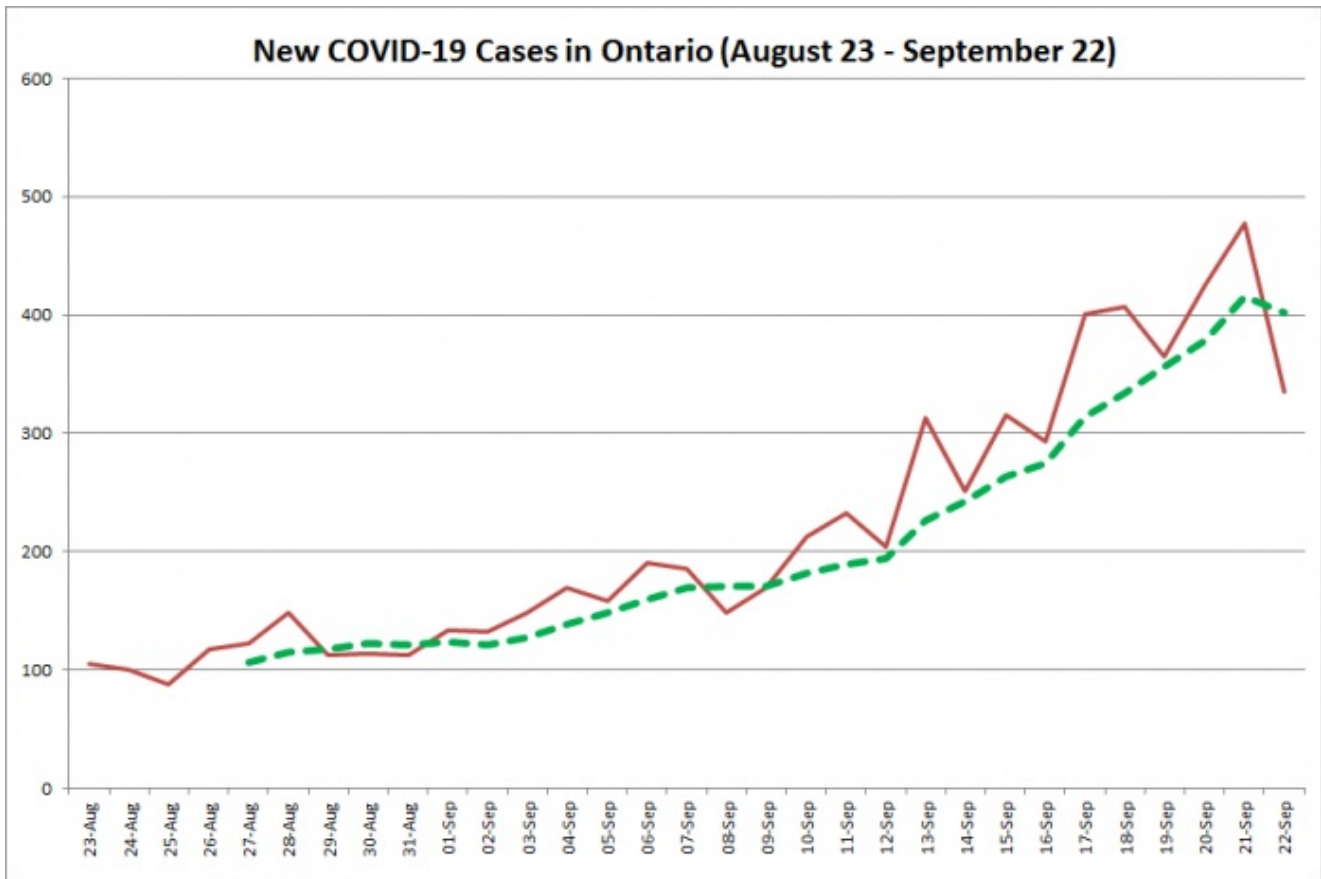
Hospitalized and in ICU on ventilator: 9 (decrease of 2)

Deaths: 2,835 (increase of 3)

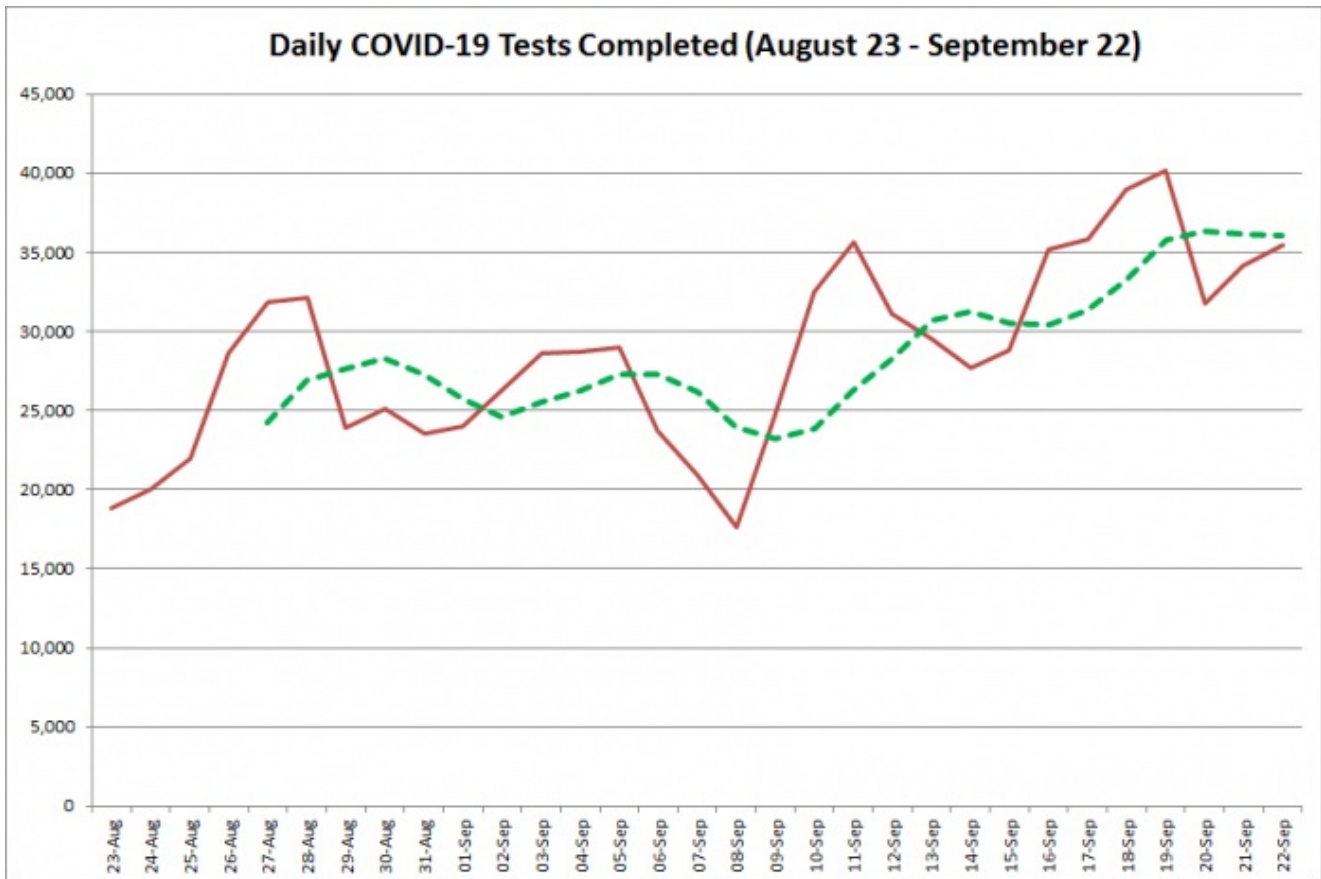
Deaths of residents in long-term care homes: 1,830 (increase of 2)

Total tests completed: 3,649,980 (increase of 35,436)

Tests under investigation: 48,079 (increase of 8,291)



New COVID-19 cases in Ontario from August 23 – September 22, 2020. The red line is the number of new cases reported daily, and the dotted green line is a five-day moving average of new cases. (Graphic: kawarthaNOW.com)



COVID-19 tests completed in Ontario from August 23 – September 22, 2020. The red line is the number of tests completed daily, and the dotted green line is a five-day moving average of tests completed. (Graphic: kawarthaNOW.com)

For more information about COVID-19 in Ontario, visit covid-19.ontario.ca.

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