

A harmless coffee break can do more harm than you think.

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NEWS

WEEKLY ROUNDUP: MORE COVID-19 VARIANTS CASES IN HALTON

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Though the number of COVID-19 cases is trending downward, Halton's top doctor is urging residents to continue to follow public health measures and "stay at home as much as possible" in light of the extra-contagious variants of the virus that have been detected in the province.

"So far, there are no signs of the variants causing worse outcomes at an individual level, but each variant seems to make the virus more infectious, allowing it to spread faster, ultimately causing more

COVID-19 infections among people," Dr. Hamidah Meghani, Halton's medical officer of health, said in a video update on Feb. 11.

As of Feb. 19, there were eight cases of variants — U.K. and South African — in Halton, three in Halton Hills, two each in Milton and Burlington and one in Oakville, according to the region's website.

The disease continues to claim more lives, as the number of deaths climbed to 189, including residents at Allendale Long Term Care Facility in Milton and the Amica Georgetown retirement home.

From Feb. 12 to Feb. 18, there were 246 new infections in the region, the website shows. The number of active cases stood at 207, including 54 in Halton Hills, 52 in Milton, 71 in Oakville and 30 in Burlington.

To date, there have been 9,181 COVID-19 cases in Halton since the pandemic started, with 8,748 marked as resolved.

— *With files from Louie Rosella.*



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Q: How can I get rid of bad breath?

A: It's everywhere. Buy this and prevent foot odor; buy that and avoid body odor. It's no surprise that bad breath is socially unacceptable. Every year, advertisers spend millions to sell their mouthwashes for bad breath.

You must understand that using a mouthwash for chronically bad breath can actually mask periodontal, or gum disease. Diseased gums and tooth decay are the two most common causes of bad breath, or "halitosis." If you smoke, you're not only more likely to have bad breath, but also to get periodontal disease. Eating strong foods, like onions and garlic, is rarely the real cause of chronic bad breath.

If you must, a saltwater rinse can be used instead of a mouthwash. You may have guessed by now that the best way to keep your breath fresh is by daily brushing and flossing, and keeping regular dental checkups. Your gums need your help in this so they can fight off plaque and deposits.