



BC Centre for Disease Control

Choirs and bands

Participating in choirs and bands may lead to increased risk of COVID-19 transmission if proper precautions are not taken. If preventative measures are taken, risks can be minimized.

It is important to use your judgement and comfort level, and consider your own health and the health of those in your group when deciding what activities to participate in. As with other social interactions, “bigger spaces, fewer faces” is a good way to approach singing and music.

This guidance does not apply to settings that are regulated under B.C. statute or where other orders, directives, or guidance may apply (e.g., schools, bars, and restaurants).

Choirs

Speaking and singing lead to the release of large respiratory droplets, which are the primary route of transmission for COVID-19. However, the forceful exhalations associated with loud singing can result in greater numbers of particles being released. As a result, the risk of COVID-19 transmission is increased when people are singing together in-person. This is especially true for large groups, spaces that do not allow for adequate physical distancing, indoor venues with poor ventilation, and when microphones, music stands or music binders are shared.

- Anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID or who has symptoms of COVID-19 should not participate in choir activities in-person.
- Public health recommends that people who are more likely to experience complications of COVID-19 – including older adults – avoid singing with others in-person, especially in larger groups.
- Adults and children who are not ill should sing in groups that are no larger than 50 and follow appropriate COVID-19 precautions (e.g., physical distancing, recording the contact information of participants, and regular hand washing) and Orders of the Provincial Health Officer.
- **Singing outdoors is best**, or in a large indoor space with good ventilation.

- Avoid sharing equipment; if sharing must occur, clean and disinfect between users.
- Reduce the duration of indoor singing. Have practice intervals followed by breaks to allow rooms to ventilate. The longer the duration of a practice where people are in close proximity, the greater the chance of transmission.
- Make sure the social aspects of choir or band rehearsals are adapted for COVID-19 precautions. Don't bring or share food, opt out of physical greetings (like hugs or handshakes), and keep adequate physical distance during breaks.

Band and musical instruments

- Anyone who has been diagnosed with COVID or who has symptoms of COVID-19 should not participate in band activities in-person
- Public health recommends that people who are more likely to experience complications of COVID-19 – including older adults – should avoid playing instruments with others in person, especially in large groups.
- Adults and children who are not ill should play instruments in groups that are no larger than 50 and follow appropriate COVID-19 precautions (e.g., physical distancing, recording the contact information of participants, and regular hand washing) and Orders of the Provincial Health Officer.
- **Playing instruments outdoors is best**, or in a large indoor space with good ventilation.
- Avoid sharing equipment. If sharing instruments is unavoidable (such as for a piano), items should be cleaned and disinfected between users.
- Consider the placement of instruments based on their risk of release of droplets (for example, flutes could be placed where exhalation would not be directed at other musicians).
- Brass instrument condensate should under no circumstances be released on the floor (as is often the case with spit valves) – this condensate should be captured in a container or on an absorbent cloth. Remember to practice hand hygiene each time after handling condensate and touching spit valves.

For more information on choirs and bands please see Guidance for Choirs and Bands + FAQ and an evidence review by the NCCEH, COVID-19 Risks and Precautions for Choirs.

SOURCE: Choirs and bands (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/community-settings/choirs-and-bands>)

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