

Public Health Recommendations for FWC 2026 in Vancouver, BC

The following are general public health recommendations for athletes, officials and other visitors to Vancouver, BC for FWC 2026 developed by Vancouver Coastal Health Medical Health Officers.

1. Prevention of Enteric Food-borne and Water-borne Illness

The risk of food-borne illness is low from restaurants and food trucks in Vancouver. All water systems are treated and tap water is safe to drink.

General advice to reduce the risk of enteric infection:

- Wash hands frequently, and always before eating. If hand washing facilities are not available, alcohol-based hand sanitizer is an effective alternative.
- Avoid consumption of raw or undercooked shellfish, such as oysters. Due to robust food safety protocols, the risk of food-borne illness from sushi purchased from Vancouver restaurants is very low.
- Report any symptoms of enteric illness (e.g. vomiting or diarrhea) to health officials as soon as possible. Enteric disease can spread among those sharing living facilities and washrooms, therefore appropriate testing, treatment and other mitigation strategies may be recommended.
- Visit the Vancouver Coastal Health website to [report food safety and other environmental health concerns](#) and to review [public beach water quality results](#).

2. Prevention of Sexually Transmitted Infections

Sexually transmitted infections (chlamydia, gonorrhea, syphilis and HIV) are circulating in Vancouver and British Columbia (BC). In particular, there is an ongoing syphilis outbreak in BC with high rates of infection in Vancouver.

All visitors should practice safer sex, including using condoms. Free condoms are available at sites throughout BC; to find a site, visit the [“Toward the Heart”](#) website and enter “safer sex supplies” into the search.

3. Prevention of Blood-borne Infections

Hepatitis C, hepatitis B and HIV are in circulation in BC. To reduce the risk of blood-borne infections, never re-use supplies for preparation, injection, inhalation or smoking of drugs. Sites where harm reduction supplies, such as needles and smoking supplies, are available can be found at the [“Toward the Heart”](#) website.

4. Prevention of Vector-borne Infections

Mosquitoes are present in Vancouver during the summer months, however the risk of mosquito-borne illness, such as West Nile Virus is very low. Insect repellents containing DEET are recommended if you plan to be outdoors in areas with mosquitos.

There is no rabies in terrestrial animals (e.g. dogs, cats, raccoons) in BC. Bats do carry rabies and visitors should avoid any contact with bats. If physical contact with a bat does occur, even if no bite or scratch is noted, seek medical attention immediately at the nearest hospital Emergency Department to assess the need for rabies post-exposure prophylaxis. All Vancouver hospitals have rabies vaccine and immunoglobulin available if required.

5. Toxic Drug Crisis

A public health emergency, declared by BC’s Provincial Health Officer in 2016, remains in place due to high rates of toxic drug (overdose) deaths. The illicit drug supply in BC is contaminated by fentanyl and other toxic substances. Vancouver continues to have one of the highest rates of death in the province.

Visitors are advised to avoid using illicit drugs and if using, to avoid using alone. Fatal overdoses have occurred in people who use drugs regularly, as well as those who are occasional users. Injection, inhalation and smoking of illicit drugs all carry a significant risk. Information on harm reduction program such as Take Home Naloxone and overdose prevention sites can be found on the [“Toward the Heart”](#) website.

6. Cannabis

Since 2018, the purchase and possession of small amounts of cannabis is legal for adults 18 years and older in Canada. A list of legal cannabis retailers in Vancouver and elsewhere in BC is available [here](#). Information on the safe use of cannabis is also available [at this website](#).

It is illegal to take cannabis across the Canadian border, whether you are entering or leaving the country. This includes products containing cannabis, such as edible cannabis, cannabis extracts and topicals.

7. Prevention of Injuries

To reduce the risk of injuries from traffic collisions, visitors are advised to:

- Follow posted speed limits.
- Always use seat belts.
- Wear helmets while riding motorcycles, bicycles and e-scooters. BC Law requires use of helmets for bicycles, motorcycles, e-scooters and off-road vehicles.
- Choose protected bicycle lanes for active travel, when possible.
- Do not consume alcohol, cannabis or other drugs if operating a motor vehicle and consume in moderation at other times.

8. Prevention of vaccine-preventable infections (to be considered *prior to travel*)

Before travelling to Vancouver, BC visitors should ensure they are up-to-date for the following vaccines:

- **Tetanus-diphtheria (Td) Vaccine:** Tetanus is ubiquitous in soil. Almost all countries provide tetanus-diphtheria vaccine in childhood. In BC, booster doses are recommended every 10 years. A combination vaccine containing protection against pertussis (whooping cough), Tdap, is preferred.
- **Measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) Vaccine:** All those born in 1970 or later should have received two doses of measles-mumps-rubella (MMR) vaccine, given at least one month apart. Measles is circulating in many areas of the world. Local cases may be introduced by visitors to the games.
- **Varicella (chickenpox) Vaccine:** Most adults born in North America and Europe will have had chickenpox in childhood and will be immune to repeat infection, or will have received chickenpox vaccine in childhood. Chickenpox is less common in other regions. For those adults who have never been vaccinated and have never had chickenpox or are uncertain if they have had it, a blood test for varicella (varicella IgG) is recommended to determine whether the vaccine is needed.
- **Meningococcal Vaccine:** Meningococcal bacteria can cause severe infection (e.g. meningitis) that is uncommon in BC but cases do occur. A single dose of a meningococcal vaccine (meningococcal A, C, Y, W135) is recommended for all adults.

- **COVID-19 Vaccine:** COVID-19 remains in circulation in BC and will be circulating during the event. Those who have previously received COVID-19 vaccination could consider a booster dose prior to the event. For those who have never received COVID-19 vaccination, a single dose is recommended for most adults.

Other recommended vaccines to **consider for certain groups, based on risk:**

- **Hepatitis B Vaccine:** Hepatitis B virus can be acquired through sexual contact with chronic carriers of the virus or through contaminated needles used for tattooing, piercings or to inject drugs. Vaccination is recommended for adults not previously vaccinated if they are at risk.
- **Mpox vaccine:** Mpox is circulating at low levels in Vancouver among gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men. In BC, gay, bisexual and other men who have sex with men who have certain risk factors (e.g. who have more than one sexual partner or have casual sex) are offered two doses of mpox vaccine (Imvamune™) given at least 28 days apart. Vaccination, if available in their home country, is recommended for those adult visitors who anticipate they may be at risk.