

COVID-19 and Ceremonial / Spiritual Practices

Participating in ceremonies and spiritual practices can be an important part of First Nations individual, family, and community health. During this COVID-19 Pandemic, people might be wondering how to continue their ceremonial or spiritual practices in ways that also follow public health measures coming from Federal and Provincial public health offices.

These guidelines were developed through consultation with public health professionals, First Nations health professionals and Knowledge Keepers / Traditional Healers.

Keep up and do more of ceremonial or spiritual practices that you can do on your own or in your home with your family.

This might include:

Smudging

Praying

Making tobacco ties

Offering tobacco

Harvesting and using medicines following protocols and the guidance of Medicine Teachers.

Drumming and / or singing songs

Using your rattles.

Telling or listening to stories and teachings

Practicing the language.

Connecting with others for some of these activities virtually using social media like Facebook Live or other platforms like FaceTime or WhatsApp.

Being generous with love, kindness, material items, if you are able.

Be cautious with ceremonial or spiritual practices that involve gathering with other people. you might consider doing things with others while keeping in mind the need to keep gatherings to less than 10* people and maintain physical distance of at least 2 meters between people.

This might include:

Having a pipe ceremony with less than 10 people in an indoor or outdoor area where people can sit 2 meters apart.

Harvesting medicines outside with other people following protocols and teachings.

Going in a sweat lodge alone or with only a couple of family members / close circle.

Delivering material items, foods or other help to elders if you are able. Make sure you wash your hands frequently if you are assisting elders.

*please note: this number reflects public health requirements and might change

Hold off on ceremonial or spiritual practices that include close contact while significant social and physical distancing recommendations are recommended.

This includes avoiding:

Sweat lodge ceremonies with more than just you or a couple of close family / circle members.

Any ceremony that has more than 10 people.

Any ceremony where physical spacing of more than 2 meters can't be maintained.

Any ceremony where feasting involving shared dishes or utensils is occurring.

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