

TOMORROW'S NEWS

UPDATE ON ALBERTA'S TOMORROW PROJECT
ESTABLISHED IN 2000 TO LEARN MORE ABOUT CANCER AND CHRONIC DISEASE



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ATP's New Home: The Arthur J.E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre

We are thrilled to announce that as of October 2024, Alberta's Tomorrow Project (ATP) has a new home: the Arthur J.E. Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre. This world-class facility was built to be sustainable, provide patient and family centred care, and to support cutting edge cancer research and collaboration.



ATP Staff in Our New Home!

The Arthur Child stands out for its green design and commitment to excellence in healthcare. In fact, the building has earned LEED Gold Certification for its eco-friendly design. LEED stands for Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design and is a prestigious award in the world of sustainability. This means that the Arthur Child has been engineered to conserve energy, water, and resources, fostering a healthier environment for all.

Let's look at some of the sustainable and innovative features of the centre:

- It saves 14 Olympic-sized swimming pools worth of water every year!
- It uses zero recycled air systems, ensuring a fresh and healthy atmosphere for all.
- Friendly robot assistants move through the halls, lending a hand with tasks such as transferring things between departments.

Patients and families were key in designing the Arthur Child. A group of volunteers called the Patient and Family Advisory Council spent over 4,800 hours making sure the building would be welcoming and peaceful. Their input led to many thoughtful touches such as a floor plan that is easy to navigate (and even resembles a hug), pull-out futons in patient rooms for family members, quiet spaces for reflection, and beautiful courtyards to enjoy.



One of the Arthur Child J.E. Comprehensive Cancer Centre's Beautiful Courtyards

The new cancer centre brings together medical experts and researchers in one location, connected by a pedestrian walkway that showcases the cancer care journey. Located on the Foothills Medical Centre campus, the cancer centre helps health professionals and scientists work closely together to improve cancer care and to quickly turn new discoveries into better treatments. For ATP, our new home opens up exciting ways to advance our research. Our work with Dr. Aaron Goodarzi on the Lung Cancer Risk Factor Survey is a great example. By connecting research and patient care, the Arthur Child allows patient experiences to help guide future research.

Our move to the Arthur Child J.E. Comprehensive Cancer Centre marks an exciting new chapter in our journey. We are grateful for the support of our participants and look forward to continuing our mission. Together, we are inspiring research for a healthier tomorrow.

LAND ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alberta's Tomorrow Project acknowledges that our work takes place on historical and contemporary Indigenous lands, including the territories of Treaty 6, Treaty 7 & Treaty 8, as well as the homeland of the Métis Nation within Alberta and 8 Métis Settlements. We recognize the enduring presence and stewardship of Indigenous peoples on this land, which we all share, celebrate, and care for. By making this acknowledgement, we hope to illustrate our commitment to reconciliation.

Understanding Lung Cancer Risk: Your Help Makes a Difference

Dear ATP Participants,

Here's something that might surprise you: while smoking is the leading cause of lung cancer, two out of five lung cancer cases occur in people who have never smoked or smoked very little. This surprising statistic highlights why we need to better understand other risk factors - particularly environmental exposures that might affect anyone with lungs.

One of the biggest risks aside from smoking is something called radon gas. You can't see, smell, or taste it, but this gas can build up in homes and cause lung cancer. In fact, radon is behind about one in every six cases of lung cancer in Canada.



ATP and Evict Radon Project Managers and Principal Investigators

To learn more about these risks, we invited all of you to complete our *Lung Cancer Risk Factor*

Survey in the Fall. Thank you so much for completing this survey! We know it was long with lots of questions, and we really appreciate the time you took to answer them all. We're working on this project with a University of Calgary research group called the Evict Radon National Study team, headed by researcher Dr. Aaron Goodarzi. Take a look at the photo - these are some of the project managers and researchers who have put their hearts into this work. By joining forces, we can learn so much more about what puts Albertans at risk for lung cancer.

In addition to the Lung Cancer and Risk Factor survey, the team also hopes to learn more about lung cancer and radon exposure in Alberta by inviting 5,000 of you to receive a free home radon testing kit.

We're so grateful to have you as part of Alberta's Tomorrow Project. Your help with our research makes a real difference in finding better ways to prevent cancer. Thank you for sticking with us and helping to create a healthier future for all Albertans.



Behind the Samples: An Inside Look at ATP's Biobank

Like a library holds books and offers resources to readers, a biobank holds biosamples and offers bioresources to researchers. Alberta Tomorrow Project's (ATP) biobank houses blood, urine, and saliva samples generously donated by over 30,000 of our participants. We keep these valuable samples securely stored in our -80 C freezers in two locations: the new biobank at the Arthur Child Comprehensive Cancer Centre and at our former location at the Richmond Road Diagnostic and Treatment Centre (RRDTC).

In the Q&A session ahead, you will learn more about ATP's very own Lab Team and our new biobank.



ATP's Lab Team: Gillian MacNevin, Kerry Munro, and Linda Greenhorn

What does a typical day on the lab team/in the biobank look like?

Everyday can look a little different for the lab team. We might be preparing to send samples to a researcher, receiving samples to add to our database, performing phlebotomy, processing and/or organizing samples, developing ways to improve our processes, or working with researchers to assess their sample requirements.

ATP has samples in 23 freezers, how do you tell them apart?

Each freezer has a unique code so we can tell them apart! At the Arthur Child, each starts with 'ACB' for Arthur Child Biobank and is then followed by a number. For example, ACB20, ACB22, etc. We joke about freezers having a personality and felt that naming them with characters from the movie Frozen, was an appropriate theme (see picture to the right). The main characters like Elsa and Anna have our primary samples and Marshmallow stores our dry ice nuggets. Olaf, the snowman in Frozen, houses the DNA samples because DNA can be 'assembled' in many ways, much like a snowman.



Freezer Anna

Why do ATP staff call the new biobank the bowling alley?

The Biobank is very long and narrow, so it quickly got nicknamed the bowling alley. To complete the image, we decided to add inflatable pins and a ball.

How were 600,000 biosamples transferred to the new biobank?

We transferred over 8,500 boxes containing nearly 600,000 biosamples in the big blue Ikea bags! Each bag was able to hold 60 boxes, and we used 146 bags in total. Bags were packed ahead of our move and stored in the -80 C freezers until the move day. On the big day, we loaded dry ice into large, insulated bins on wheels, known as speed packs. Each speed pack was able to hold 4 Ikea bags, with dry ice placed around each bag (to make sure the samples stayed cold). These were loaded into a moving truck and transported to The Arthur Child Biobank. Then the bags were unloaded from the speed packs and placed into our new -80 C freezers. It then took us several weeks to carefully unpack each bag and record the new location for each box of samples.



Speed packs and ice bins waiting to be filled in RRDC



The Biobank as a Bowling Alley

What do you enjoy the most about working in the biobank?

Each day in a biobank is unique. We work hands-on with a variety

of sample types and support a diverse array of research. We learn something new every day, and we're always prepared for the unexpected - like the introduction of toenail collections in 2025! It's very exciting. Plus, nerd alert, it feels like we work in a secret lair....and the dry ice adds to the ambience!

What is the most valuable thing about ATP's biobank?

Every biosample stored in ATP's Biobank is valuable. Every sample has the potential to shed light on the complex nature of cancer and other chronic diseases. Every sample holds a piece of the past that could help change the future.



FAQs



What happens if I move outside Alberta?

You are still considered an active participant! ATP continues to follow participants even when they relocate out of the province or country. We simply ask that you contact tomorrow@ahs.ca and provide your up-to-date contact information such as mailing address, phone number(s), and email so we can continue to reach you.

What happens after I turn 85?

After you turn 85, you will no longer be required to complete our health and lifestyle surveys. We do this because ATP is a 50- year undertaking and since our youngest participants were 35 when we started, it makes 85 years the natural endpoint. This does not mean that you will no longer be contributing to ATP though! We will still receive updated health information for you each year through data linkage with hospital and medical records (if you consented to this when you joined the study), which will continue to support cancer and chronic disease research. After 85 you can also expect to continue to receive these annual newsletters!

I missed the last survey. Does this affect my participation going forward?

You remain an active and valued participant in ATP, even if you miss a survey for any reason (for example, a survey only being available online). There will be plenty more opportunities to participate in future surveys, which we typically release every 1-3 years. Your continued participation is important!

How is participation post-cancer diagnosis helpful?

Your participation remains incredibly valuable after a cancer diagnosis. While ATP studies how to prevent cancer, we're equally focused on improving the entire cancer journey from early detection to treatment and recovery. By continuing to participate after a cancer diagnosis, you help us better understand how cancer develops, how different treatments work, and what supports recovery. For example, many of the health and lifestyle factors we study (like diet and exercise) are important both for prevention and during cancer treatment and recovery. Your ongoing participation, especially after a diagnosis, provides essential insights that help others facing similar challenges.



Have you moved, changed your email address or phone number?

Please let us know us know if you have new contact information-we want to stay in touch!

HERE'S HOW TO UPDATE YOUR SECURE FILE

Contact the ATP Call Centre:

- Send is an email at tomorrow@ahs.ca
- Call the toll-free line 1.877.919.9292

OR

Login to the ATP Participant Portal:

- If already connected, go to <https://myatphub.ca>
- Log-in with your Alberta.ca account
- Once logged in, click "Address Update" menu on left

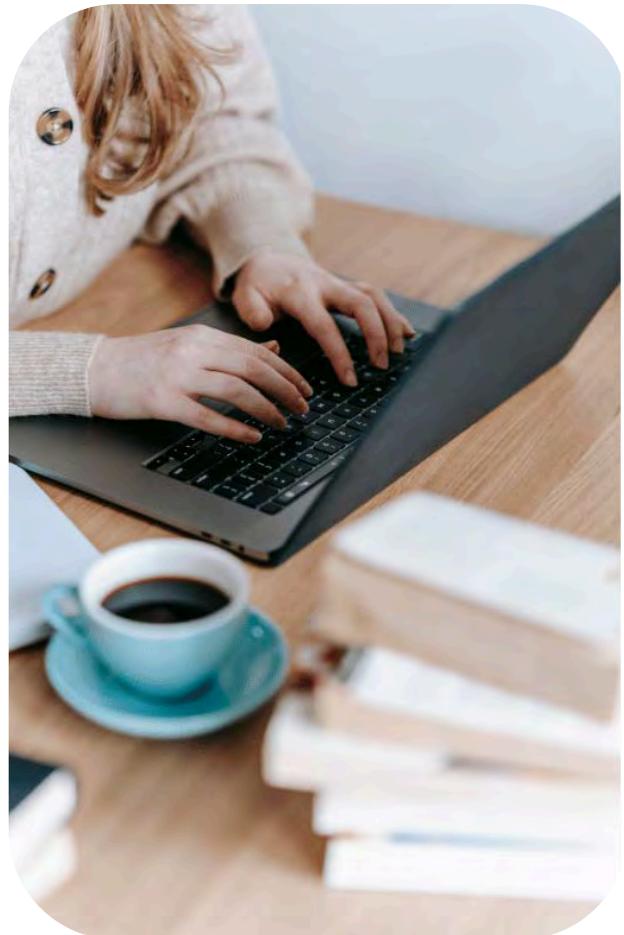
CONTACT US

Email: tomorrow@ahs.ca

Toll-free telephone: 1.877.919.9292

ATP Participant Portal: <https://myatphub.ca>

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For more information visit: myATP.ca

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