

Dr. Charles Gardner, Medical Officer of Health  
Dr. Colin Lee, Associate Medical Officer of Health  
Dr. Lisa Simon, Associate Medical Officer of Health

## COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #60

### Pfizer-BioNTech Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine Now Available for Boosters for 12+

**Attention:** Physicians, Emergency Departments, Hospital CEOs, Hospital Laboratories, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse and Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Hospices, Coroners, Funeral Directors, Dentists, Group Homes, Homes for Special Care, Optometrists, Corrections, Municipalities, Licensed Child Care Providers

**Date:** October 14, 2022

---

#### Importance of Fall COVID-19 Vaccine Boosters

As the fall respiratory season is upon us, it is recommended that everyone ensure they are up to date with their COVID-19 vaccinations. **Staying up to date means that people have received their primary series and have received a dose of COVID-19 vaccine within the last 6 months.** Anyone who has not received a dose of COVID-19 vaccine in the last 6 months is recommended to receive their fall booster now to provide them with protection as the fall respiratory season ramps up.

For those who are at higher risk of COVID-19 (those 65+, living in congregate settings, Indigenous people and their household members, who are pregnant, who are severely or moderately immunocompromised and health care workers), it is recommended that they receive their fall booster at an earlier 3-month interval. For health care workers, the reason to receive it at 3 months is to protect your vulnerable patients and health care capacity.

COVID-19 vaccine, including bivalent booster vaccines, can be co-administered on the same day or at any interval with other vaccines for anyone 5 years and older. For those under 5, it is recommended to have an interval of 14 days between COVID-19 vaccine and any other vaccine.

Providing COVID-19 boosters at the same time as annual influenza shots is recommended to increase coverage for both vaccines which will protect our community and health care system this winter.



## Pfizer-BioNTech Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine Now Approved

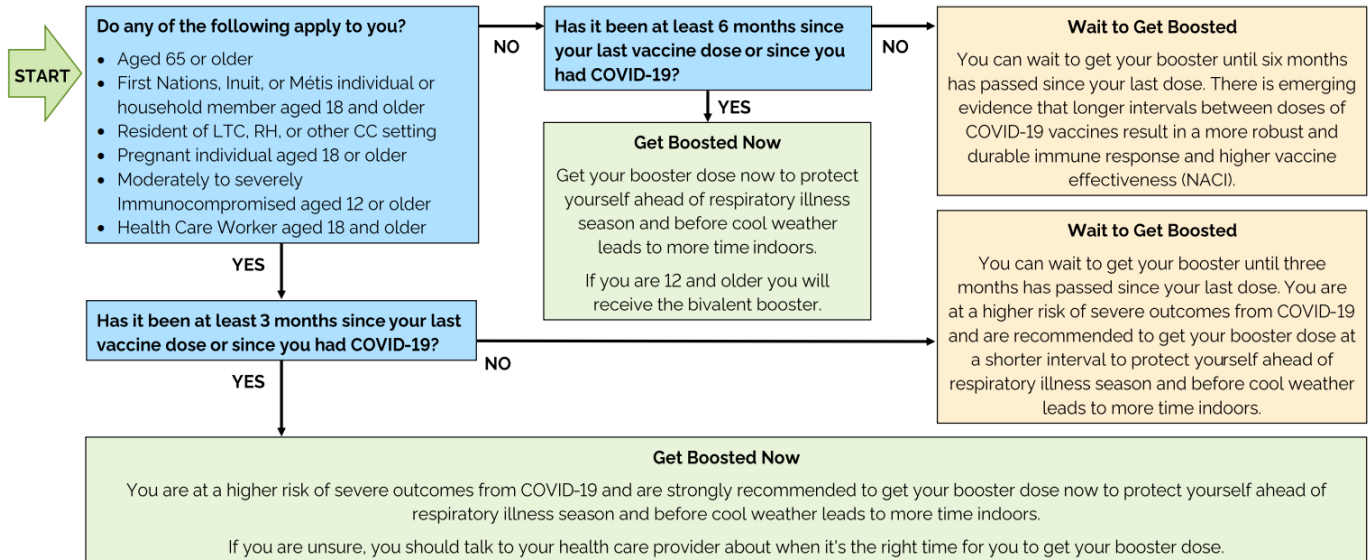
On October 7, 2022 Health Canada authorized the Pfizer-BioNTech COMIRNATY® Bivalent COVID-19 vaccine. This vaccine, like the Moderna Bivalent vaccine provides protection against both the original COVID-19 virus and Omicron variant.

As per the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI)'s [Updated Guidance on COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Doses in Canada](#), bivalent Omicron-containing COVID-19 vaccines have all been shown to induce stronger and more robust immune responses to the Omicron VOC and sublineages, when compared to original mRNA vaccines. Any authorized bivalent Omicron containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccine is expected to provide protection against severe outcomes from COVID-19.

At this time, there is **no evidence to suggest any meaningful clinical difference in protection between the BA.1 (Moderna) and BA.4/BA.5 (Pfizer-BioNTech) bivalent vaccines**. Of note, the Pfizer-BioNTech bivalent vaccine is authorized for those 12 years and older, while the Moderna bivalent vaccine is authorized for those 18 years and older. Bivalent vaccines are the preferred vaccine products for the 2022 fall booster program among individuals 12 years of age and older, as they contain Omicron, which is the most antigenically-distinct variant from the original SARS-CoV2 strain.

## When Should You Get a COVID-19 Booster Dose?

For individuals aged 5 and older who have completed a primary series: Use the chart below to determine when it's time to get your COVID-19 booster.



- Health care workers are not at a higher risk of severe outcomes, unless they belong to another high-risk group. However, health care workers who care for high-risk patients are recommended to be vaccinated to protect their vulnerable patients and all health care workers are recommended to be vaccinated to ensure health system capacity.
- All vaccines available in Ontario are approved by Health Canada and are safe, effective, and are the best way to stay protected from COVID-19 and its variants.
- Bivalent Omicron-containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are the preferred booster products for authorized age groups (i.e., individuals 12 and older).

	<b>Pfizer-BioNTech Bivalent Vaccine</b>	<b>Moderna Bivalent Vaccine</b>
Dose	30 mcg / 0.3 mL 15 mcg ancestral strain and 15 mcg Omicron BA.4/5	50 mcg / 0.5 mL 25 mcg ancestral strain and 25 mcg Omicron BA.1
Authorized Age	12 years and older	18 years and older
Unpunctured at 2-8°C	Up to 10 weeks	Up to 30 days
Punctured	12 hours	24 hours
Vial size	6 doses	5 doses

Neither product requires dilution.

For those providing COVID-19 vaccine, our [COVID-19 Vaccine Order Form](#) (Appendix A) has been updated to include the Pfizer-BioNTech bivalent product.

The health unit continues to offer COVID-19 immunization clinics in all health unit offices and pop-up clinics as we are able to, but as we have resumed other immunization activities our capacity for such will be limited. Primary care providers are asked to assist by providing COVID-19 vaccine for their patients. If you have previously been set up in COVAX and need a password reset, please email [CovaxSupport@smdhu.org](mailto:CovaxSupport@smdhu.org). If you have not previously offered COVID-19 vaccine in your practice and would like to onboard now to offer the vaccine, please email [VaccineOrders@smdhu.org](mailto:VaccineOrders@smdhu.org) and one of our staff will be in contact.

The following options for COVID-19 vaccination continue to be available:

- [Local pharmacies](#).
- Health Unit office-based clinics throughout Simcoe Muskoka - appointments available through the [Provincial Vaccine Appointment Booking System](#).
- Community clinic at Georgian Mall in Barrie – appointments available through the [Provincial Vaccine Appointment Booking System](#) – closed to walk-ins at this time.
- [RVH COVID-19 vaccination clinic](#) at 29 Sperling Drive in Barrie – appointments available through the [Provincial Vaccine Appointment Booking System](#) and walk ins may be accommodated based on demand.
- [Couchiching OHT COVID-19 vaccination clinic](#) in Orillia at OSMH Kiwanis Building - West Entrance, 170 Colborne St. West.
- GO-VAXX bus throughout Simcoe Muskoka – to access the schedule [click here](#).

The following reference tables have also been updated to support those providing COVID-19 vaccines:

**Authorized COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine Products and Doses by Age**  
 (Table 1)

		6 months to 4 yrs <sup>1</sup>	5 to 11 yrs	12 to 17 yrs	18 yrs and older
<b>Pfizer-BioNTech</b>	Primary Series	3 mcg/0.2 mL	10 mcg <sup>2</sup> /0.2 mL	30 mcg <sup>2</sup> /0.3 mL	30 mcg <sup>2</sup> /0.3 mL
	Monovalent Booster		10 mcg <sup>2</sup> /0.2 mL	30 mcg/0.3 mL	30 mcg/0.3 mL
	Bivalent Booster			30 mcg <sup>3</sup> /0.3 mL	30 mcg <sup>4</sup> /0.3 mL
<b>Moderna</b>	Primary Series	25 mcg/0.25 mL	50 mcg/0.25 mL OR 50 mcg/0.5 mL	100 mcg <sup>2</sup> /0.5 mL	100 mcg <sup>2</sup> /0.5 mL
	Monovalent Booster			50 mcg/0.25 mL OR 50 mcg/0.5 mL	50 mcg/0.25 mL OR 50 mcg/0.5 mL
	Bivalent Booster			50 mcg/0.5 mL (IC only) <sup>3</sup>	50 mcg <sup>4</sup> /0.5 mL

<sup>1</sup> There is no preferred product for the primary series for individuals 6 months to 4 years.

<sup>2</sup> Monovalent Pfizer-BioNTech is the preferred product for the primary series in individuals 5 to 29 years and is the only authorized booster product for individuals 5 to 11 years.

<sup>3</sup> Bivalent Pfizer-BioNTech is the only bivalent mRNA product authorized for use as a booster in individuals 12 to 17 years. As per NACI, bivalent Moderna (50 mcg) may be offered to immunocompromised individuals 12 to 17 years off label and with informed consent.

<sup>4</sup> There is no preference between bivalent Pfizer-BioNTech and bivalent Moderna for booster doses in individuals 18 years of age and older.

**Age Categories and Intervals for COVID-19 Vaccination**  
 (Table 2)

Age	Recommended Intervals <sup>7</sup>	Minimum Intervals
6 months to 4 years	<p><b>Primary Series</b></p> <p>Pfizer-BioNTech (3 mcg)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 56 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 56 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p>Moderna (25 mcg)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 56 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p><b>Booster Doses - not eligible</b></p>	<p><b>Primary Series</b></p> <p>Pfizer-BioNTech (3 mcg)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 21 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 56 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p>Moderna (25 mcg)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 28 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p><b>Booster Doses - not eligible</b></p>
Immuno-compromised individuals 6 months to 4 years	<p><b>Primary Series</b></p> <p>Pfizer-BioNTech (3 mcg)<sup>8</sup></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 56 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 56 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p>Moderna (25 mcg)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 56 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 56 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p><b>Booster Doses - not eligible</b></p>	<p><b>Primary Series</b></p> <p>Pfizer-BioNTech (3 mcg)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 21 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 56 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p>Moderna (25 mcg)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 28 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 28 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <p><b>Booster Doses - not eligible</b></p>

5 years and older	<b>Primary Series</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 56 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> </ul> <b>Booster Doses</b> 6 months (168 days) after last dose	<b>Primary Series</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 28 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> </ul> <b>Booster Doses</b> 3 months (84 days) after last dose
Immuno-compromised individuals 5 years and older	<b>Primary Series</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 56 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 56 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <b>Booster Doses</b> 6 months (168 days) after last dose	<b>Primary Series</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> dose, 28 days after 1<sup>st</sup> dose</li> <li>• 3<sup>rd</sup> dose, 28 days after 2<sup>nd</sup> dose</li> </ul> <b>Booster Doses</b> 3 months (84 days) after last dose

<sup>7</sup> There is good evidence that longer intervals between the first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines result in more robust and durable immune response and higher vaccine effectiveness and may be associated with a lower risk of myocarditis and/or pericarditis in adolescents and young adults. See the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#) for more information.

<sup>8</sup> Guidance from NACI is expected with regards to the recommended number of doses for the primary series for immunocompromised infants and children who receive Pfizer-BioNTech (3 mcg).

For more information on currently authorized COVID-19 vaccine products and doses by age, refer to the Ministry of Health, [COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#) document.

### Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Information

For more detailed information about eligibility and guidance, please refer to the [Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#) document.

For more information about the rollout of COVID-19 vaccine in our area, please refer to the SMDHU [COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunization](#) webpages.

There are a number of COVID-19 resources and documents available through our Health Professional Portal at [www.smdhu.org/hpportal](http://www.smdhu.org/hpportal) as well as through [Public Health Ontario](#) and the [Government of Ontario](#).

To help determine the best ways to protect yourself and others from COVID-19 infection and serious illness, refer to the SMDHU [COVID-19 Community Risk Tool](#).

<b>Date:</b>	<b>Facility Name:</b>
<b>Facility Contact:</b>	<b>Phone #:</b>
Place orders by <b>3pm Wednesday</b> for pick up the following <b>Wednesday morning</b> .	Vaccine order inquiries 1-877-721-7520 ext. <b>8808</b> Orders must include the <b>previous 4 week</b> temperature log.

In order for facilities to store and administer COVID-19 vaccine, their staff must be set up as users for COVAX (the provincial documentation system used for all COVID vaccines) and someone with signing authority for the agency must sign off on our External Partner Agreement. If you need assistance with these, please email [VaccineOrders@smdhu.org](mailto:VaccineOrders@smdhu.org) and someone will contact you.

COVID-19 Vaccines	Requires Dilution	Recommended Age Group	Unpunctured expiry	Punctured Expiry	# of doses in vial	Current # of Doses in your fridge	Requested # of Doses
<a href="#">Moderna Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine</a> Blue Cap/Green Label	No	18 years and older	Unopened vials are stable in fridge stored at 2-8°C for up to 30 days	Once punctured, vaccine stable for up to 24 hours in fridge	5		
<a href="#">Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine</a> Red Cap/Blue Border Label	No	30 years and older	Unopened vials are stable in fridge stored at 2-8°C for up to 30 days	Once punctured, vaccine stable for up to 24 hours in fridge	10		
<a href="#">Moderna Pediatric COVID-19 Vaccine</a> Blue Cap/Purple Label	No	6 months to under 5 years of age	Unopened vials are stable in fridge stored at 2-8°C for up to 30 days	Once punctured, vaccine stable for up to 24 hours in fridge	10		
<a href="#">Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine</a> Purple Cap & Label	Yes	Prioritize for 12 - 29 years of age	Unopened vials are stable in fridge stored at 2-8°C for up to 31 days	Once diluted, vaccine must be used within 6 hours	6		
<a href="#">Pfizer BioNTech Bivalent COVID-19 Vaccine</a> Gray Cap & Label	No	12 years and older	Unopened vials are stable in fridge stored at 2-8°C for up to 10 weeks	Once punctured, vaccine stable for up to 12 hours in fridge	6		
<a href="#">Pediatric Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine</a> Orange Cap & Label	Yes	5- to 11-year-olds	Unopened vials are stable in fridge stored at 2-8°C for up to 10 weeks	Once diluted, vaccine must be used within 24 hours	10		
<a href="#">Pediatric Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 Vaccine</a> Maroon Cap & Label	Yes	6 months to under 5 years of age	Unopened vials are stable in fridge stored at 2-8°C for up to 10 weeks	Once diluted, vaccine must be used within 12 hours	10		

Visit our website to [order pre-filled syringes](#) - Available for requests less than 1 vial. Orders will be fulfilled within 2 weeks of submission.

Vaccine will be provided to HCPs in thawed state – must only be transported one time thawed so must be taken directly to the facility fridge in cooler and stored at 2-8°C.

Health Unit Office to be picked up at (please check):

- Barrie   
  Collingwood   
  Cookstown   
  Midland   
  Orillia   
  Huntsville   
  Gravenhurst

VIM Order # (for office use only): \_\_\_\_\_

**Confidentiality Notice:**

The contents of the document(s) accompanying this facsimile transmission are confidential and intended only for use by the individual(s) named above. It may contain information that is privileged, confidential, or otherwise protected from disclosure. *Any review, dissemination or use of this transmission or its contents by persons other than the addressee is strictly prohibited.*