

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 #61

Updated NACI Guidance for Children 6 Months to 4 Years, Revision of High-Risk Populations & Out of Province Vaccination Recommendations

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: November 10, 2022

While over 50% of our residents 70 years of age and older have had a COVID-19 booster dose in the last 6 months, it is important to note that many people are currently not up to date for COVID-19 vaccinations. With the respiratory illness season upon us, COVID-19 and Influenza vaccination are our best protection.

Coverage for fall COVID-19 booster doses remains particularly low in the following priority populations:

- Immunocompromised
- Those who are currently pregnant
- Those living with severe mental illness
- Recent refugees
- Those with substance use disorders
- Those with intellectual or development disability
- Those with recent experience with homelessness

Please continue to discuss the importance of a fall booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine with your patients to increase their protection with the ongoing risk of infection in the community and their waning immunity.

Updated National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) Guidance for Children 6 months through 4 years who are Immunocompromised

A three-dose (for monovalent Moderna 25 mcg) or four-dose (for monovalent Pfizer-BioNTech 3 mcg) primary series is recommended for certain moderately to severely immunocompromised children with the



aim of enhancing the immune response and establishing an adequate level of protection for those who may develop a sub-optimal immune response to a standard two-dose/three-dose primary series.

As per the recent [NACI statement](#), moderately to severely immunocompromised infants and children **6 months through 4 years should be offered a primary series of three doses of monovalent Moderna (25 mcg). If monovalent Moderna (25 mcg) is not readily available, a four-dose primary series of monovalent Pfizer-BioNTech (3 mcg) may be offered.**

The preferential recommendation for monovalent Moderna (25 mcg) for this age group is due to feasibility of series completion rather than any safety signals observed.

- Immunocompromised infants and children 6 months to 4 years who receive the monovalent Moderna (25 mg) vaccine are eligible for a third dose to complete their primary series at a recommended interval of 56 days after receiving their second dose.
- Immunocompromised infants and children 6 months to 4 years who receive monovalent Pfizer-BioNTech (3 mcg) are eligible to receive a fourth dose to complete their primary series at a recommended interval of 56 days after receiving their third dose.

Table 1: Age Categories and Intervals for COVID-19 Vaccination

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

Revision of High-Risk Populations

In accordance with [NACI](#), the list of high-risk groups of those who are strongly recommended to receive a bivalent booster dose, and encouraged to do so at the earlier three month interval from last dose or COVID-19 infection, has been updated to include (new groups since last update in **bold**):

- Individuals aged 65 years and older;
- Residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, Elder Care Lodges, and individuals living in other congregate settings that are 12 years and older;
- Individuals 12 years and older with moderately to severely immunocompromising conditions;
- **Individuals 12 years and older with an underlying medical condition that places them at high-risk of severe COVID-19;**
 - **Individuals with an underlying medical condition that places them at high-risk of severe COVID-19 may include those with cardiac or pulmonary disorders, diabetes mellitus and other metabolic diseases, cancer, renal disease, anemia or hemoglobinopathy, neurologic or neurodevelopmental conditions, class 3 obesity (BMI of 40 and over).**
- Health care workers;
 - Health care workers are not at a higher risk of severe outcomes, unless they belong to another high-risk group. However, patient-facing 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.
- Pregnant individuals;
- Adults who identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis and their adult non-Indigenous household members;
- **Adults in racialized and/or marginalized communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19.**

Out of Province Vaccination Recommendations

For guidance on managing and documenting individuals who have received COVID-19 vaccines outside of Ontario, please see below. If the individual has not met the criteria for having completed their primary series, **one or two additional Health Canada approved doses will be required to complete the primary series. It is recommended to administer the Health Canada approved dose at a recommended 56 day interval since the previous dose or at a minimum of 28 days.**

Table 2: Guidance on Managing and Documenting Individuals Who Have Received COVID-19 Vaccines Outside of Ontario

Immune Status	Acceptable vaccine combinations for complete primary series when individuals have received non-health Canada approved vaccine (not including individuals 6 months to 4 years)
Immunocompetent	2 Health Canada
	1 non-Health Canada + 1 Health Canada
	2 non-Health Canada + 1 Health Canada
	3 non-Health Canada
Immunocompromised	3 Health Canada
	1 non-Health Canada + 2 Health Canada
	2 non-Health Canada + 1 Health Canada
	3 non-Health Canada

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 as well as through [Public Health Ontario](#) and the [Government of Ontario](#).

To help you 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](#).