

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 #67 Updated Vaccine Status Definitions and Pfizer XBB.1.5 COVID-19- mRNA Vaccine Now Available

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, Ontario Health Central, Indigenous Health Care & Community, 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 16, 2023

In follow up to the [Public Health Alert sent September 25th](#), we now have the Pfizer XBB vaccine available (in addition to the Moderna XBB vaccine which is already available) for those 12 years of age and older, with the pediatric and infant Pfizer XBB formulations expected to be available by the end of October. There is no preference between the Pfizer and Moderna XBB vaccines for any eligible person or age group. Pharmacies have also started to receive their supply of COVID-19 XBB vaccines. COVID-19 XBB and Influenza vaccines are now available for anyone in the following high-risk groups:

- Hospitals for inpatients, staff, and high-risk program outpatients
- Long-Term Care Homes and Elder Care Lodges for residents, staff, and essential caregivers
- Individuals at high-risk for influenza and/or COVID-19 related complications or hospitalization:
 - Residents and staff of congregate living settings (e.g., chronic care facilities, retirement homes)
 - Pregnant individuals
 - Individuals ≥ 65 years of age
 - All children 6 months to 4 years of age [based on influenza risk to support coadministration]
 - Individuals who are from a First Nation, Inuit or Métis community, and/or who self-identify as First Nation, Inuit, or Métis, and their household members
 - Individuals 6 months of age and older with underlying health conditions per NACI
 - Members of racialized and other equity deserving communities
- Health care workers and first responders

COVID-19 XBB and Influenza vaccines will open to the general population the week of October 30th.

For children 6 months through 4 years of age who have a partial series completed, please refer to the [Ministry of Health COVID-19 Vaccine guidance](#) for various scenarios outlined in Appendix B.



A. For those NOT moderately to severely immunocompromised

Age	Immunization History ¹	Recommended Number of XBB Doses and Interval ² Between Doses	
		Moderna XBB Schedule ³	Pfizer XBB Schedule
6 months – 4 years	3 or more doses	N/A	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 168 days from last dose Minimum: 84 days from last dose⁴
	2 doses	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 168 days from last dose Minimum: 84 days from last dose⁴ 	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days from last dose (if 2nd dose was Moderna) 56 days from last dose (if 2nd dose was Pfizer)
	1 dose	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose Minimum: 28 days from last dose 	2 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose and between doses Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days from last dose (if 1st dose was Moderna) and between doses If 1st dose was Pfizer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 days between dose 1 & 2 56 days between dose 2 & 3
	0 doses	2 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days between doses Minimum: 28 days between doses 	3 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days between doses Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 days between dose 1 & 2 56 days between dose 2 & 3
5 years +	2 or more doses	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 168 days from last dose Minimum: 84 days from last dose⁴ 	

¹ Refers to the doses of non-XBB COVID-19 vaccine that were previously received.

² Recommended intervals are based on NACI recommendations. A longer interval between doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, results in a more robust and durable immune response and higher vaccine effectiveness. The minimum interval is the shortest interval at which the product should be given and is outlined in the product monographs.

³ For individuals **6 months – 4 years**, this column assumes that all previous non-XBB doses were all Moderna vaccines. If one or more dose was Pfizer, follow the Pfizer XBB Schedule.

⁴ Per [NACI](#), a shorter interval (3 to < 6 months) may be used to support fall program implementation.

B. For those moderately to severely immunocompromised

Age	Immunization History ⁵	Recommended Number of XBB Doses and Interval ⁶ Between Doses	
		Moderna XBB ⁷	Pfizer XBB
6 months – 4 years	4 or more doses	N/A	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 168 days from last dose Minimum: 84 days from last dose⁸
	3 doses	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 168 days from last dose Minimum: 84 days from last dose⁸ 	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days from last dose (if 3rd dose was Moderna) 56 days from last dose (if 3rd dose was Pfizer)
	2 doses	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose Minimum: 28 days from last dose <i>Moderna preferred⁹</i>	2 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose and between doses Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days from last dose (if 2nd dose was Moderna) If 2nd dose was Pfizer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 56 days between dose 2 & 3 56 days between dose 3 & 4

Age	Immunization History ⁵	Recommended Number of XBB Doses and Interval ⁶ Between Doses	
		Moderna XBB ⁷	Pfizer XBB
6 months – 4 years	1 dose	2 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose and between doses Minimum: 28 days from last dose and between doses <i>Moderna preferred⁹</i>	3 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose and between doses Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days from last dose (if 1st dose was Moderna) If 1st dose was Pfizer <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 days between dose 1 & 2 56 days between dose 2 & 3 56 days between dose 3 & 4
	0 doses	3 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days between doses Minimum: 28 days between doses <i>Moderna preferred⁹</i>	4 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days between doses Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 21 days between dose 1 & 2 56 days between dose 2 & 3 56 days between dose 3 & 4
5 years +	3 or more doses	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 168 days from last dose Minimum: 84 days from last dose⁸ 	
	2 doses	1 dose <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 28 days from last dose (if 2nd dose was Moderna) 21 days from last dose (if 2nd dose was Pfizer) 	
	1 dose	2 doses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recommended: 56 days from last dose and between doses Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderna: 28 days from last dose (if 1st dose was Moderna) and between doses Pfizer: 21 days from last dose (if 1st dose was Pfizer) and between doses 	
	0 doses	2 doses Recommended: 56 days between doses Minimum: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Moderna: 28 days between doses Pfizer: 21 days between doses 	

⁵Refers to the doses of non-XBB COVID-19 vaccine that were previously received.

⁶ Recommended intervals are based on NACI recommendations. A longer interval between doses of a COVID-19 vaccine, results in a more robust and durable immune response and higher vaccine effectiveness. The minimum interval is the shortest interval at which the product should be given and is outlined in the product monographs.

⁷ For individuals 6 months – 4 years, this column assumes that all previous non-XBB doses were all Moderna vaccines. If one or more dose was Pfizer, follow the Pfizer XBB Schedule.

⁸ Per NACI, a shorter interval (3 to < 6 months) may be used to support fall program implementation.

⁹ The ministry preferentially recommends the Moderna XBB vaccine over the Pfizer XBB vaccine for individuals 6 months – 4 years who are moderately to severely immunocompromised. This product preference reflects acceptability and feasibility considerations for implementing a 3 dose (Moderna) vs. 4 dose (Pfizer) series and greatly likelihood of series completion in high-risk individuals, with fewer doses required in the Moderna schedule.

Vaccine Ordering Information for Health Care Providers and Facilities

We have added the Pfizer XBB products to the [COVID-19 vaccine order form](#).

Vaccine Info	Pfizer XBB COVID-19 Vaccine			Moderna XBB COVID-19 Vaccine
Cap & Label	12 years + Grey cap & label	5 to 11 yr Blue cap & label	6 mth–4yr Maroon cap & label	6 months and up Royal blue cap/coral blue label
Dose	30 mcg / 0.3 mL	10 mcg / 0.3 mL	3 mcg / 0.2 mL	6 months through 11 years = 25 mcg / 0.25 mL 12 years and older = 50 mcg / 0.5 mL
Dilution	No	No	Yes 2.2 mL/vial	No
Vaccine Storage and Handling				
Unpunctured at 2-8°C	Up to 10 weeks from thaw date			Up to 30 days
Punctured	12 hours			24 hours
Vial size	6 doses	6 doses	10 doses	2.5 mL = 5 doses x 0.5 mL or up to 10 when 0.25 mL doses drawn

A reminder to all HCPs that all doses of COVID-19 vaccine in Ontario must be documented in the COVAXon system. If you have new staff in your facility that require set up or accounts that need to be reset, please email covaxsupport@smdhu.org

We ask that when documenting in COVAXon, all users ensure that the client’s information is up to date.

This is especially important for residents for Long-term care homes and Retirement homes. We ask that providers be sure to update the reason for immunization to LTCH Rhome resident, and the institution to the current location that the client is living.

For more 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](#) 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](#).