

## **COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #28**

### **Simcoe Muskoka Identified as a Hot Spot for Delta Variant, Significantly Increased Vaccine Supply and Updated Second Dose 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:** June 18, 2021

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#### **Further Dose Two Acceleration and Simcoe Muskoka Designated as a Delta Variant Hot Spot**

As of **Monday, June 21, 2021** at 8:00 a.m., all Ontarians who received their first dose of a mRNA COVID-19 vaccine on or before May 9, 2021 will be eligible to book or rebook their second dose appointment at a shortened interval of at least 28 days.

- Simcoe Muskoka has been identified as a Delta hot spot, therefore as of **Wednesday, June 23, 2021** at 8:00 a.m., individuals who received their first dose of a mRNA vaccine on or before May 30, 2021 who live in Simcoe Muskoka will be eligible to book or rebook their second dose appointment at a shortened interval of at least 28 days.

Starting the **week of June 28, 2021** (days/sequence to be confirmed) all Ontarians aged 18 and over who have received their first dose of a mRNA COVID-19 vaccine will be eligible to book their second dose appointment at least 28 days after the first dose. At this time, youth 12 – 17 years of age will continue to be eligible for their second dose starting August 9<sup>th</sup>, and at least 56 days (8 weeks) from when they received their first. It is expected that second doses for youth will be accelerated as well, but the dates for this are not yet confirmed.

Youth who are Indigenous or household family members of Indigenous adults will continue to receive their second dose as per current provincial eligibility of at least 28 days.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has confirmed that a mixed vaccine schedule can be completed safely and is effective. To ensure maximum protection against COVID-19 and the Delta variant, Ontarians are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as they can and to receive their second dose within the recommended interval with whichever vaccine is available to them. At Simcoe Muskoka District



Health Unit clinics, if we have the same mRNA vaccine as the individual received for dose 1 then we will provide that, and otherwise we will offer the other mRNA vaccine as interchangeable.

### **Updated Recommendation for Second Dose for Those Who Received AstraZeneca Vaccine**

On Thursday, June 17, 2021, NACI released [updated recommendations](#), including that a mRNA vaccine is **now preferred** as the second dose for individuals who received a first dose of the AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine, based on emerging evidence of a potentially better immune response from this mixed vaccine schedule and to mitigate the potential risk of Vaccine-Induced Immune Thrombotic Thrombocytopenia (VITT) associated with viral vector vaccines.

In making this recommendation, NACI considered the recent epidemiology of COVID-19 in Canada, including the circulation of variants of concern; evidence on VITT, including risk and rates, associated with viral vector vaccines but not associated with the mRNA vaccines; Canada's increasing supply of mRNA vaccines; and a comprehensive analysis of the implications on ethics, equity, feasibility, and acceptability.

People who received two doses of AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine can be assured that the vaccine provides good protection against infection and very good protection against severe disease and hospitalization. Additional vaccination with mRNA vaccine is not recommended.

### **Moderna Vaccine Supply Update**

Ontario will be receiving a large amount of Moderna vaccine over the next couple of weeks. It is critically important that this vaccine is utilized to provide first doses to those remaining to be vaccinated and second doses to those now eligible to receive their second dose, in order to avoid a fourth wave and protect our community from the Delta variant.

We are adding a significant number of appointments in the coming weeks to the provincial appointment booking system (PVAB) that will allow for people who have not yet been vaccinated to book an appointment and for people to move up their second dose appointments.

At this time, Moderna vaccine can only be administered to those 18 years of age and older. The company has applied to Health Canada for authorization of their product in youth, which is currently being reviewed.

**We would encourage any primary care providers who have not yet registered with us to provide COVID-19 vaccine in their practices to consider doing so.** Health unit staff will support you and your staff with onboarding with COVaxON (the provincial vaccination management system) and clinical supplies are provided for administering the vaccine with each order. If you are interested, please email [vaccineorders@smdhu.org](mailto:vaccineorders@smdhu.org).

Having vaccine readily available provides the opportunity to offer vaccination consistently to all patients who either haven't been vaccinated or have received their first dose and are now eligible for their second dose. We know that primary care providers are the most trusted source of health information for patients, and a recommendation by a primary care provider can have a positive impact. Evidence has shown that one of the contributing factors to vaccine hesitancy is convenience. By making vaccine readily available, we can help people overcome this potential barrier and increase coverage in our community. This will be very important over the summer months, and as we move towards a long-term sustainable model of vaccine access.

## Updated Moderna Vaccine Storage and Handling Information

Canada will be receiving Moderna vaccine from the USA, which comes with the following format changes:

- Each vial will contain 14 (max 15) doses (vs 10 doses in EU vials)
- Each vial has a larger fill volume of 8mL (vs 6mL in EU vials)
- Dose volume of 0.5 mL remains the same
- Expiration date is not printed on the USA cartons or vials. This will be available on Moderna's Canadian Website (<http://www.modernacovid19global.com/ca>) and a [Health Product Risk Communication](#).

Health Canada has also approved the following revision to the Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Product Monograph which applies to existing supply in circulation and the new supply coming in:

- After a vial has been punctured, it can be stored for up to 24 hours (vs 6 hours previous). This includes prefilled syringes of Moderna vaccine as well.

## Documentation of Out of Province Immunization

Our online [form](#) for people who received COVID-19 vaccine to report their vaccinations to us is available on our website now. Please note people are required to submit an image of their proof of vaccination which public health is required to validate before it is loaded into the provincial COVAX system.

## FAQ for Health Care Providers: Reports of Myocarditis/Pericarditis After COVID-19 Vaccination

The following document was created by Sick Kids Hospital to support health care providers:  
[Reports of myocarditis/pericarditis after COVID-19 vaccination FAQ for health-care providers](#)

## For immunization program information, support materials and forms refer to our website

[www.smdhu.org/pcportal](http://www.smdhu.org/pcportal) or call the Immunization program, Monday thru Friday 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., at 705-721-7520 or toll free 1-877-721-7520 ext. 8806.

## Additional COVID-19 Vaccine Information

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

For more information on the province's three-phased vaccine distribution implementation plan, please visit [COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario](#).

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](#).