

Patient updates

Nov. 5, 2021

Dear patients,

We are writing to update you on COVID-19 vaccines. In this communication, we will share:

- Updated eligibility for third COVID-19 vaccine doses
- How to book your third COVID-19 vaccine
- COVID-19 vaccines for children 5-11 years of age
- Resources you can use to help guide decision making and deciding to get your COVID-19 vaccine

Updated eligibility for third COVID-19 vaccine doses

On Oct. 28, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommended expanding third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to the following groups:

- Individuals 70 years of age and older (born in 1951 or earlier)
- Individuals who received two doses of the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine or one dose of the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine
- First Nations, Inuit and Métis adults and non-Indigenous members of their households
- Health-care workers and designated essential caregivers in congregate settings (including long-term care and retirement home staff and designated caregivers)

If you fall into these groups, a third dose recommended at a **minimal interval of six months after your second dose.**

Due to Ontario's decision to increase the interval of time between dose first and second in the spring of this year, many people will not be due for a third dose until end of November or early December.

Those who have completed a two-dose series are **still very well protected** from severe illness and hospitalization if they do become ill from a COVID-19 infection. This booster dose is to help provide additional immunity and protection, particularly from the delta variant. For more information, you can view the [Ministry of Health Guidance on third doses](#).

How to book your third COVID-19 vaccine

At this time, we recommend all patients who fall in these expanded eligible groups to book your third dose at a community clinic. Booking options will become available Nov. 6. You can use the [provincial vaccination portal](#) to find a clinic near you.

At this time, **we will not** be offering third doses to these expanded groups in our clinics. Our priority will be to continue to provide first and second doses for those who haven't had these yet, and third doses for immunocompromised patients in our Saturday COVID-19 Vaccine clinics. This will allow us to continue to prioritize providing timely primary care to all our patients in our regular weekday clinics.

COVID-19 vaccines for children 5-11 years of age

Health Canada has not yet approved the use of Pfizer or Moderna in children 5-11 years of age, however we anticipate this approval will be coming soon.

Once these vaccines are approved, we encourage all parents to get their children vaccinated. We continue to see higher rates of COVID-19 infections in people who are unvaccinated. Children becoming vaccinated will help ensure schools can remain open and leaves less opportunity for the virus to spread and change. This will be a huge step towards achieving herd immunity.

We recognize many parents may have questions and concerns about this. As such, we want to direct you to some upcoming webinars hosted by West Toronto Ontario Health Teams to help you make an informed decision for your child. The table below outlines some future town halls you can register for.

COVID-19 vaccines and children: a webinar for parents and guardians.

Session #1	Session #2
Tuesday, November 9, 2021 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. Click to join online Or join by phone: 416-915-6530 Access code: 2469 793 2249	Monday, November 15, 2021 11 a.m. to noon Click to join online Or join by phone: 416-915-6530 Access code: 2460 732 7459
Online password (if required): Toronto	

Resources you can use to help guide decision making and deciding to get your COVID-19 vaccine

We know there is a lot of information and it continues to be updated regularly. We wanted to alert you to some trusted and reputable resources you can use to make a decision about getting your first, second or third dose.

- [VaxFacts](#): The Scarborough Health Network is ready to talk with you and answer any questions you have related to vaccines. You can book a 20-minute phone appointment [here](#) to talk with one of the clinic doctors.
- [SickKids Covid-19 Vaccine Consult Service](#): Book an appointment to have a safe, judgement-free conversation about the covid-19 vaccine for children and youth. You can book online [here](#) or call 437-881-3505.

Take care and be well,

SMHAFHT Leadership Team