

Patient updates

Nov. 26, 2021

Dear patients,

We are writing to share information about COVID-19 vaccines. In this communication, we will highlight:

- Third doses: who is eligible
- COVID-19 vaccines for children 5-11 years of age
- How to book your COVID-19 vaccines
- View our most recent Town Hall from Nov. 23 –*COVID-19 Vaccination in Children, Booster Doses, and more*

Third doses: who is eligible

Many people are now eligible and will continue to become eligible to book their third COVID-19 Vaccine. The recommended time interval between a second and third dose is different based on both age and health status.

Severely immunocompromised people are eligible for a third dose two months after their second dose. If you fall into one of these groups, we strongly recommend booking your third dose appointment. These groups include people with the following health conditions:

- Active treatment for solid tumour or hematologic malignancies
- Solid organ transplant or taking immunosuppressive therapy
- Chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-T-cell therapy or hematopoietic stem cell transplant (within two years of transplantation or taking immunosuppression therapy)
- Moderate to severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Stage 3 or advanced untreated HIV infection; acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
- Active treatment immunosuppressive therapies

Ongoing data and research has shown that the 2 dose series is, 77 per cent effective for people who are severely immunocompromised vs 90 per cent effective in people who have stronger immune systems. Getting your third dose will help improve your protection.

Other groups who are now eligible for a third dose are:

- Health care workers
- People over 70+
- Elderly in congregate settings
- First Nations, Inuit, and Metis Adults
- Those who received two doses of AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD or one dose of Janssen

People in these groups can receive their third dose six months or 168 days after their second dose. If you are unsure when you are eligible, please use this [dose calculator](#) to check. A third COVID-19 vaccine is recommended to ensure continued protection against COVID-19 infections. For more information about third doses and eligibility, please see the [Ministry of Health Third Dose Recommendations](#).

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

We are excited that children aged 5-11 can now receive the Pfizer COVID vaccine! This vaccine has shown to be very safe in kids and is 90.7 per cent effective. We recommend all children get their COVID-19 vaccine, to help reduce the spread, protect children and their families, and help them get back to being kids again!

The dose for children is 1/3 the adult dose. As of right now, children must be 5 years of age to receive their first dose. The time between a first dose and second dose will be eight weeks apart.

At this time, it is recommended for children in this group to not have another vaccine given 14 days BEFORE or AFTER their COVID-19 vaccine. This is due to an abundance of caution. We are highlighting this to make sure you space out your child's COVID-19 vaccine with other vaccine appointments, including their flu vaccine.

There are many great resources about childhood COVID-19 vaccines available. We have linked a few you may find helpful.

- [MAX the VAX-Ontario Association of Children's Aid Societies](#)
- [SickKids](#)- a phone consult service for patients and parents
- [University of Waterloo-FAQ](#)
- [Toronto Public Health- COVID-10: Children and Vaccines](#)

How to book your COVID-19 vaccines

Third doses and childhood COVID-19 vaccines will be offered through city run mass vaccination clinics, pharmacies, local community clinics, schools and mobile clinics, and pop ups. Where you choose to get your vaccine will determine how you can book. If you are still in need of your first or second dose you can use these links to book your COVID-19 vaccine.

- For city run clinics OR pharmacies, you can use the [Provincial COVID-19 Vaccination Portal](#) or call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900.
 - five city run clinics have been designated as clinics for kids
- For mobile city clinic's you view the [City or Toronto Website](#) to find a list of mobile clinics.
 - Mostly for adult third doses- there may be some options for kids
- For local community clinics, including [Sherbourne Health](#), book through their website or by selecting their site on this list of [community clinics](#).
 - Some sites will run designated days for kids vaccines only- please double check when booking
- St Joseph's Health Centre will be opening their vaccines for children specifically on Nov 29. You can book [here](#).
- Some children may be eligible for the vaccine though their school. Your school will be in touch, if this is an option.

At this time, we will not be offering COVID-19 vaccines for 5-11 year olds in our clinics. We will focus our resources on essential primary care services and will be working with partner agencies as they deliver vaccines in our neighbourhood and throughout the city.

If you need support to book your COVID-19 vaccine, please call our clinics and press 8. Our clerical staff will be happy to support you.

View our most recent Town Hall from Nov 23-COVID 19 Vaccination in Children, Booster Doses, and more

Thank you to all of our patients who recently attended the November 23rd town hall. We are grateful for your questions and engagement during the event. If you missed the session, or would like to view it again, you can find it [here](#).

Take care and be well,

SMHAFHT Leadership Team