

COVID-19 Vaccine Bulletin #32 Delta Variant & Boosting Vaccine Rates

Quick Updates

- Check out [Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph's vaccination dashboard](#). The **total number of doses** administered in Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph (WDG) is **372,424**.
- Anyone who requires a **FIRST DOSE can DROP-IN at any of WDGPH clinic sites** during clinic hours. See [clinic locations/times on website](#).
- **All residents/workers in WDG** can go to wdgpublichealth.inputhealth.com/ebooking to book, re-book, or cancel an appointment. Please [read the instructions](#) before proceeding to the booking system.
- When there are last-minute [extra second dose appointments](#) at a WDGPH clinic, a notice will be posted on social media at which point residents can drop-in for a second dose appointment. People can follow these updates on: [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#).
- There is a **Vaccine Booking Helpline: 1-844-780-0202 (Mon-Fri, 8 am to 8 pm)** for anyone who has issues booking an appointment online.
- Primary care providers have access to curated lists of their patients that have been vaccinated – sign up for [information sessions](#). Health care providers must be registered with [ONE ID](#) in order to access this list. Review this [eHealth Ontario website](#) for more information.

Vaccine Status for Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph

80% of residents 12+ received one dose	60% of residents 12+ received two doses
Maximum number of doses administered in one week = 37,629	Total number of doses given in primary care office or pharmacy = 85,080

Age Group	First Dose	Second Dose
60+	94%	87%
50-59	84%	66%
40-49	79%	59%
30-39	74%	51%
20-29	68%	42%
12-19	67%	29%

Updates on Delta Variant

- As of June 28, 2021, the majority of COVID-19 cases in Ontario (56.5%) are infected with a variant that is negative for both N501Y and E484K mutations, suggesting that the Delta variant is now dominant in Ontario.
- Emerging data indicate that Delta has increased transmissibility and increased severity when compared to Alpha. The case fatality rate is reported as lower than Alpha although the current estimate is uncertain.
- Vaccine effectiveness (VE) against hospitalization due to COVID-19 is similar to Alpha with either one or two doses. There is evidence of reduced vaccine effectiveness for symptomatic COVID-19 with a single dose while two doses provide good protection.
- Given the estimated higher transmissibility and slightly lower VE with Delta compared to Alpha, increased vaccination coverage of the total population would be required to approach herd immunity. In Canada, vaccine targets were set at 75% of the population 12 years of age and older, or 67% of the overall population. The equivalent of 67% vaccine coverage for Alpha is 90% for Delta. Some public health measures will likely remain necessary to reduce spread among unvaccinated/partially vaccinated individuals.

Risk Assessment for Delta

Issue	Risk Level	Degree of Uncertainty
Increased Transmissibility	High Data indicate that Delta can be up to 64% more transmissible than Alpha.	Low
Disease Severity	Moderate Data indicate increased risk of hospitalization.	Low
Re-infection	Low	High
Lowered Vaccine Effectiveness	Moderate There is ~14% lower VE against symptomatic infection after first dose and ~10% lower VE after two doses. VE against hospitalization for Delta is high and similar to Alpha.	Moderate
Impacts on Testing/Surveillance	Low The risk of Delta cases not being detected in ON's surveillance program is low.	Low

Reference

Public Health Ontario (June 30, 2021). *COVID-19 Delta: Risk assessment and implications for public health measures.*

Mixing Vaccines Messaging

- Recently, the Chief Scientist for the World Health Organization, Dr. Swaminathan, warned against individuals creating their own mixing and matching vaccine schedules without prior approval from public health agencies. The statement was not, as some have misinterpreted, against vaccine mixing that has received approval from public health based on evidence from vaccine research.
- The two mixed vaccine schedules that are considered safe and effective and have received approval in Canada are 1) AstraZeneca first dose followed by an mRNA vaccine for second dose; and 2) any combination of the mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna) for first and second doses.

Simple Messages to Boost Vaccination Rates

- Two large-scale field studies from the Behavior Change for Good Initiative (Wharton School) and the University of Pennsylvania have tested over 20 different types of text messaging strategies to reveal the most effective messaging for boosting vaccination rates.
- These studies aimed to find simple communication messages to encourage those individuals who want to do what's best for their health but lack the necessary motivation to take action.
- The studies were conducted with over 47,000 primary care patients and over 4,700 pharmacies and found that simple messages that reminded individuals that a flu shot was “waiting” or “reserved” for them was the most effective, boosting vaccination rates by up to 11%.

University of Pennsylvania (February 2021). [Behavior Change for Good unveils effective strategies to boost vaccination rates.](#)

Primary Care Study

- The most effective intervention was sending two text messages: the first text message was sent three days before the patient's appointment noting that a flu vaccine is available for them and the second message sent one day before the appointment stated that, “this is a reminder that a flu vaccine has been reserved for your appointment.”

Milkman, K.L. et al. (May 2021). [A megastudy of text-based nudges encouraging patients to get vaccinated at an upcoming doctor's appointment.](#) PNAS Brief Report.

Pharmacy Study

- The most effective intervention was sending two text messages: the first text message noted that “It’s flu season and you can get a flu shot at Walmart” and the second message was sent 3 days later reminding patients, “a flu-shot is waiting for you at Walmart.”

Milkman, K. L. et al. (May 2021). [*A mega-study of text-message nudges encouraging patients to get vaccinated at their pharmacy.*](#) Pre-print article available on SSRN.

Aggregate Primary Care Vaccination Report

- To learn more about the new COVaxON Aggregate Primary Care Vaccination Report, you can register for one of these three [information sessions](#) below:
 - July 21st 2021 - 8:00 to 9:00 am - Click [here](#)
 - July 22nd 2021 - 8:00 to 9:00 am - Click [here](#)
 - July 29th 2021 - 8:00 to 9:00 am - Click [here](#)
- Access the EMR-eReport Patient Vaccination Reconciliation Toolkit by clicking [here](#).

Reliable Sources of Information on Vaccines

[WDGPH Vaccine Administration Training](#)

[Public Health Agency of Canada](#)

[Government of Ontario](#)

[Ministry of Health](#)

[Public Health Ontario](#)

[Centre for Effective Practice \(CEP\)](#)

[World Health Organization](#)

[COVID-19 Studies from the World Health Organization Database](#)

[Centres for Disease Control and Prevention \(CDC\)](#)