

## COVID-19 Vaccine Bulletin #40

### Booster Dose Updates

#### Quick Updates

- Review Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health's (WDGPH) vaccination progress: [COVID-19 Vaccination Report](#). The vaccination dashboard now includes individuals who are receiving third doses.
- The 15-minute Booster dose observation period of mRNA vaccines could be waived temporarily during the emergency response to the Omicron variant. A reduced post-vaccination observation period, between 5 -15 minutes could be considered for the administration of third booster doses of COVID-19 vaccine during the pandemic, if specific conditions are met such as past experience with the two previous COVID-19 vaccine doses and other relevant [conditions](#) as outlined in the NACI 2020-2021 influenza vaccine advice.
- **NEW\*** WDGPH is now offering [Drop-in COVID-19 vaccine clinics](#) for all populations eligible for a first, second, or booster dose. This includes children ages 5-11 needing a first or second dose with a minimum 21-day interval between doses (children must be 5 years old at the time of vaccination) and all adults age 18+ who are eligible for a booster dose.
- WDGPH has launched its process for receiving [Medical Exemptions to COVID-19 Vaccination](#) for individuals who cannot receive the vaccine for valid medical reasons. Medical exemptions must be completed by an Ontario physician or registered nurse in the extended class and documentation must be faxed to WDGPH for review.

#### Vaccine Status for Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph

<b>86%</b> of residents 5+ received at least one dose	<b>82%</b> of residents 5+ received two doses
% Received at least one dose in: Well. County = <b>87</b> Duff. County = <b>86</b> City of Guelph = <b>91</b>	Total number of doses given in primary care office pharmacy or Partner-Led Clinic = <b>461,731</b>

Age Group	First Dose	Second Dose	Booster Dose
60+	99%	99%	80%
50-59	91%	89%	55%
40-49	89%	88%	45%
30-39	92%	89%	39%
20-29	84%	81%	31%
12-19	85%	82%	9%
5-11	53%	13%	0%

#### Updates to Ministry of Health Guidance

[COVID-19 Vaccination Third Dose Recommendations](#) (updated January 13, 2022)

[COVID-19 Medical Exemptions to vaccination](#) (updated January 12, 2022)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines](#) (updated January 5, 2022)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Recommendations for Special Populations](#) (updated December 31, 2021)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Errors and Deviations Guidance](#) (updated December 30, 2021)

## General Eligibility by Age and Third Doses

Population	Eligibility	Vaccine Types	*Third dose eligibility
<b>Under 5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not eligible</li> </ul>		
<b>5 – 11</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age-based (Based on <b>Birth Date</b>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Pediatric Pfizer primary series only</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only for individuals who are immunocompromised (completion of primary series)</li> </ul>
<b>12 to 17</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age-based (Based on <b>Birth Date</b>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Pfizer preferential recommendation</li> <li>Moderna is permitted with informed consent</li> <li>Note: For an 11 year old turning 12 who received their first dose as <b>Pediatric Pfizer</b>, the primary series may be finished with the pediatric Pfizer dose.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Only for individuals who are:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12 – 17 year old who are immunocompromised (completion of primary series)</li> <li>16 and 17 year old HCWs and FNIM</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>18 – 29</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age-based (Based on <b>Birth Date</b>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adult Pfizer preferential recommendation</li> <li>Moderna permitted with informed consent</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All individuals eligible</li> </ul>
<b>30 – 69</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age-based (Based on <b>Birth Date</b>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any mRNA vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All individuals eligible</li> </ul>
<b>70+</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Age-based (Based on <b>Birth Date</b>)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any mRNA vaccine (Pfizer and Moderna)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All individuals eligible</li> </ul>

## Fourth COVID-19 Vaccine Dose for Long-Term Care Homes, Retirement Homes and Other Congregate Settings

The Ontario Immunization Advisory Committee (OIAC) has [recommended](#) that fourth doses of mRNA vaccines be made available to residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, Elder Care Lodges, and older adults living in other congregate settings providing assisted-living and health services if at least three months, or 84 days, have passed since their third dose.

The province is [mandating third doses](#) for all staff, students, volunteers, caregivers, and support workers who are eligible for a booster by January 28, 2022. Visitors will be required to provide proof of a booster dose once the temporary pause on general visitors is lifted.

## Prioritization of Booster Doses for Pregnant Individuals

WDGPH is asking all health care providers who care for pregnant patients to **strongly encourage** them to get vaccinated, including with a booster dose to prevent risk of severe outcomes from the Omicron variant. Vaccine uptake among pregnant individuals is not as high as in other populations, despite their risk for severe illness if infected with COVID-19.

Additional information to support providers is available from the [Ministry of Health](#), the [Society of Obstetricians and Gynecologists of Canada \(SOGC\)](#), and the [Provincial Council for Maternal and Child Health \(PCMCH\)](#).

## OMA Vaccination Tool for Patients with Allergies

The OMA, in partnership with the Section on Allergy and Clinical Immunology, has released the [Pathways to COVID-19 Vaccination for Those with Allergies](#) tool to support primary care physicians with decision-making around COVID-19 vaccine-related concerns, determining when patients require a referral to an allergist and answering commonly asked questions. Medical exemptions for allergies related to COVID-19 vaccines remain extremely rare and, in most cases, following an allergist's evaluation, patients will be offered COVID-19 vaccination.

## Updated NACI Recommendations regarding Subsequent Vaccine Doses after Myocarditis/Pericarditis following Immunization

On January 14, 2022, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) issued [updated guidance](#) regarding vaccination of individuals who experienced (or may have experienced) this adverse event in the past.

NACI continues to recommend that:

- As a **precautionary measure**, further doses of mRNA COVID-19 vaccines should generally be **deferred** among people who experienced **myocarditis (with or without pericarditis)** within 6 weeks of receiving a previous dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. This includes **any person who had an abnormal cardiac investigation** including electrocardiogram (ECG), elevated troponins, echocardiogram or cardiac MRI after a dose of an mRNA vaccine.

NACI now additionally recommends that:

- Those with a history compatible with **pericarditis** and who either had **no cardiac workup or had normal cardiac investigations**, can receive the next dose once they are **symptom free and at least 90 days has passed since vaccination**.
- Some people with confirmed **myocarditis (with or without pericarditis)** after a dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine **may choose to receive another dose of vaccine** after discussing the risks and benefits with their healthcare provider. Please review the updated guidance for additional details.

## Administration of Vaccine following COVID-19 Infection

Please note that, at present, there is no particular time period recommended by NACI or the OIAC that an individual should wait to be immunized, following COVID-19 infection. The relevant considerations are:

- Someone who is acutely ill (whether with COVID-19 or otherwise) should wait for all symptoms of their acute illness to resolve before being immunized.

- Someone who is isolating (e.g., because they have COVID-19) should wait until their self-isolation period is over before attending leaving their home to be immunized.
- Someone who has had MIS-C is recommended to wait until they have recovered, or it has been more than 90 days since diagnosis, whichever is longer.

For more information, refer to the [provincial COVID-19 Vaccine Administration guidelines](#).

## Recommended Vaccine Dose Interval in the Context of the Omicron Variant

On [December 14](#), NACI reviewed a summary of available evidence on the epidemiology of the Omicron (B.1.1.529) variant, feasibility of booster programs, immunological principles, and emerging data on vaccine performance. NACI reaffirmed its recommendation that an interval of at least 8 weeks should be used between first and second dose in those 5-11 years of age. The OIAC affirmed its support for NACI's recommendation on [December 23](#).

## COVID-19 Testing and Case Contact, Outbreak Management Interim Guidance

In response to the evolving situation related to the COVID-19 Omicron (B.1.1.529) variant of concern (VOC), the Ministry of Health has updated its [COVID-19 Intergraded Testing and Case, Contact and Outbreak Management Interim Guidance: Omicron Surge](#). This guidance is to be used as an interim update and superseding all other guidance documents on the Ministry's [website](#).

The number of Omicron cases is rising rapidly in Ontario such that individuals with symptoms indicative of COVID-19 can be presumed to be infected with COVID-19 to initiate timely self-isolation and prevent transmission in the community. Ontario continues to strive to mitigate impacts on hospitals and the broader health system, and on society overall.

## 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 \(CDC\)](#)

[National Advisory Committee on Immunizations \(NACI\)](#)

More information about how to book an appointment is available: <https://wdgpublichealth.ca/your-health/covid-19-information-public/covid-19-vaccine-information/covid-19-vaccine-children-ages>