

## COVID-19 Vaccine Bulletin #42

### 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.
- **NEW** As of February 18<sup>th</sup>, the province is expanding COVID-19 booster dose eligibility to all adolescents 12-17 years of age. Eligible individuals can [book an appointment](#) approximately six months (168 days) after a second dose and must be 12 years of age at the time of appointment.
- **NEW** On March 1<sup>st</sup>, the province is lifting proof of vaccination requirements for all settings. Masking requirements will remain in place until further notice.
- **VACCINE FOR <5 CHILDREN** On February 11<sup>th</sup>, the US FDA [postponed an advisory committee meeting](#) to discuss data on the Pfizer-BioNTech SARS-CoV-2 vaccine for young children ages 6 months through 4 years of age. Pfizer notified the agency of new data from an ongoing clinical trial. An [FDA statement](#) was released to allow the agency time to evaluate and consider the data.
- **NEW** On February 4<sup>th</sup>, NACI provided suggestions regarding the optimal timing between COVID-19 vaccine doses (primary series and booster doses) and previous SARS-CoV-2 infection. NACI has considered available data, basic principles of vaccinology and immunology, and expert opinion informed by knowledge of other viral diseases. Please see the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#) for details.

### Vaccine Status for Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph

<b>89%</b> of residents 5+ received at least one dose	<b>86%</b> of residents 5+ received two doses	<b>Age Group</b>	<b>First Dose</b>	<b>Second Dose</b>	<b>Booster Dose</b>
% Received at least two doses in: Well. County = <b>85</b> Duff. County = <b>83</b> City of Guelph = <b>88</b>	Total number of doses given in primary care office pharmacy and Partner-Led Clinic = <b>498,471</b>	60+	99%	97%	83%
		50-59	91%	90%	63%
		40-49	90%	88%	54%
		30-39	92%	90%	47%
		20-29	85%	82%	38%
		12-19	86%	83%	13%
		5-11	58%	38%	0%

### Updates to Ministry of Health Guidance

[COVID-19 Vaccination Third Dose Recommendations](#) (updated February 17, 2022)

[COVID-19 Vaccination Timing Guidance for Previously Infected Individuals with SARS-CoV-2](#) (updated February 4, 2022)

[Directive #6 for COVID-19 Vaccination Policy in Health Settings](#) (updated February 2, 2022)

- [Resource Guide](#) (updated February 2, 2022)

[COVID-19 Vaccination in Pregnancy & Breastfeeding Clinical Support Tool](#) (update January 25, 2022)

[COVID-19 Vaccine Administration Errors and Deviations Guidance](#) (updated January 25, 2022)

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

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

## Health Canada approves the Novavax Nuvaxovid COVID-19 Vaccine

On February 17, [Health Canada approved the Novavax Nuvaxovid COVID-19 vaccine](#) for adults 18 years of age and older. Nuvaxovid is a protein-based vaccine that is administered as two doses, 21 days apart. In its clinical trials, Nuvaxovid was 90% effective at preventing symptomatic COVID-19 and 100% effective at preventing severe disease.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has [issued its recommendations](#) regarding the Nuvaxovid vaccine, and has commented on its use in the context of the other COVID-19 vaccines approved in Canada. For individuals requiring a primary series:

- NACI **preferentially** recommends that a complete series with an **mRNA COVID-19 vaccine should be offered** to individuals in the authorized age group without contraindications to the vaccine;
- NACI recommends that an authorized **recombinant protein subunit COVID-19 vaccine (Novavax Nuvaxovid) may be offered** to individuals in the authorized age group without contraindications to the vaccine **who are not able or willing to receive an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine**;
- NACI recommends that a **viral vector COVID-19 vaccine may be offered** to individuals in the authorized age group without contraindications to the vaccine **only when all other authorized COVID-19 vaccines are contraindicated**. Informed consent should include discussion about the risks and symptoms of vaccine-induced immune thrombotic thrombocytopenia (VITT) as well as the need to seek immediate medical care should symptoms develop.

Refer to the product [monograph](#) and [NACI statement](#) for additional information. Provincial guidance regarding the Nuvaxovid vaccine is expected shortly.

## Off-Label use of 10 mcg Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 Pediatric Vaccine in Children Born in 2017

On January 1, the Ministry of Health revised its eligibility criteria for the 10 mcg (pediatric, orange cap) Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine program to require that individuals be five years old at the time of immunization. The use of age (as opposed to birth year) to determine eligibility is consistent with other aspects of Ontario's COVID-19 vaccination program.

The Ontario Immunization Advisory Committee (OIAC) has [released a report](#) regarding the off-label use of the 10 mcg Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to four-year-old individuals born in 2017. Using birth

year to determine eligibility in 2022 would allow these children to be immunized prior to their fifth birthday. Following discussion on this topic and voting at the meeting on January 4, 2022, and again via a rapid response process on January 7, 2022, the OIAC was unable to reach consensus to issue a recommendation. Their [report](#) summarizes the factors that they considered in their deliberation.

## Impact of Vaccination during Pregnancy on Infant Outcomes

A new study ([Halasa et al.](#)) in the CDC's *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR)* suggests that receiving a two-dose mRNA vaccination series during pregnancy provides protection against COVID-19 hospitalization for the infant. The study used a test-negative, case-control design and included 379 infants (< 6 months) from 20 pediatric hospitals across the United States. Key findings include:

- Completion of a two-dose vaccination series **at any time** during pregnancy was 61% effective (CI 31% to 78%) against COVID-19 hospitalization for infants age <6 months;
- Completion of a two-dose vaccination series **during the first 20 weeks** of pregnancy was 32% effective (CI -43% to 68%) against COVID-19 hospitalization for infants age <6 months (not statistically significant);
- Completion of a two-dose vaccination series **at 21 weeks of pregnancy or later** was 80% effective (CI 55% to 91%) against COVID-19 hospitalization for infants age <6 months.

## 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>

The COVID-19 pandemic continues to create stress and anxiety, particularly for those who do not have access to regular support. People of all ages can access the [Wellness Together Canada](#) and PocketWell online portal. These apps are available to help people get online access to mental health and substance use resources, and measure and track aspects of their mental well-being.