

## COVID-19 Vaccine: Update #15

### Appointment Booking Update for Those with Highest and High-Risk Health Conditions

**Attention:** Physicians, Emergency Departments, Hospital CEOs, Hospital Laboratories, Infection Control Practitioners, Occupational Health Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Nurse and Nurse Practitioners, EMS, Designated Officers, Midwives, Family Health Teams, Pharmacies, Central LHIN, NSM LHIN, Beausoleil First Nation, Moose Deer Point First Nation, Rama First Nation, Wahta First Nation, Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, Hospices, Coroners, Funeral Directors, Dentists, Group Homes, Homes for Special Care, Optometrists, Corrections, Municipalities

**Date:** April 19, 2021

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#### Those with Highest-Risk Health Conditions

Those with the following highest-risk health conditions and up to one essential caregiver, who have not been contacted by their hospital or health care provider for vaccination, can now book an appointment to receive their COVID-19 vaccine at a community clinic by calling the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900 or by using the provincial [online booking system](#):

- Organ transplant recipients
- Hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients
- People with neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised (for example, motor neuron disease, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis)
- Haematological malignancy diagnosed within the last year
- Kidney disease with estimated glomerular filtration rate (eGFR) under 30

#### Those with High-Risk Health Conditions

Those with the following high-risk health conditions, who have not already been contacted by their hospital or health care provider for vaccination, can now pre-register on our website to receive a community clinic appointment booking for their COVID-19 vaccine:

- Obesity (BMI over 40)
- Other treatments causing immunosuppression (for example, chemotherapy, immunity-weakening medications)
- Intellectual or developmental disabilities (for example, Down Syndrome)

One essential caregiver is also eligible for those with high-risk health conditions who require regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or activities of daily living.



For those who are eligible for vaccination, proof of diagnosis or eligibility from their hospital or health care provider is not expected. Self-attestation will be required when they arrive at the clinic.

**Second Dose Interval Exceptions**

The following are the only limited provincial exceptions to the provincial 16-week (112 day) interval between the first and second vaccine dose:

- Transplant recipients (including solid organ transplants and hematopoietic stem cell transplants)
- Individuals with malignant hematologic disorders and non-hematologic malignant solid tumors receiving stable, active treatment (chemotherapy, targeted therapies, immunotherapy), excluding those receiving solely hormonal therapy or radiation therapy

This is in addition to previously identified groups for receiving second dose at the recommended product monograph interval (Residents of Long-term Care Homes, Retirement Homes, and Elder Care Lodges; and those living in First Nation communities).

These people should receive their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose of vaccine at the product monograph recommended interval:

Vaccine	2 <sup>nd</sup> dose interval	2 <sup>nd</sup> dose interval for exceptions
AZ	16 weeks	12 weeks
Pfizer	16 weeks	26 days
Moderna	16 weeks	26 days

Transplant recipients and eligible cancer patients should be provided with a letter from their hospital clinic/specialist to confirm that they are eligible to get a second dose appointment at the monograph interval, identifying the reason for the exception. The letter should be presented at both the first and second appointment.

**Update on 2<sup>nd</sup> Dose Bookings for Those Already Immunized**

The provincial booking system is being updated to allow people that were vaccinated before it was launched to book their appointment to receive dose 2. As soon as this functionality has been launched, we will update our website with that information. In the meantime, we are contacting people who are approaching their 16-week interval to ensure they receive their 2<sup>nd</sup> dose.

Those who received their first immunization between December 30 – January 9, are currently being contacted by the health unit to book their second dose appointment. We will continue to work through this grouping until the provincial system is updated to allow people to book their own 2<sup>nd</sup> dose appointment.

**AstraZeneca COVID-19 Vaccine Now Available in Ontario to Those 40 Years and Older**

The province has announced that effective Tuesday April 20<sup>th</sup>, anyone 40 years of age and older in Ontario can receive the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine from a local participating pharmacy or primary care

provider. Primary care providers are reaching out to their patients to book appointments based on vaccine availability. To find a local pharmacy in your area that is offering the vaccine, please refer to [COVID-19 pharmacy vaccine locations \(ontario.ca\)](#)

### **Updated Guidance for Pregnancy and Breastfeeding**

The Ministry of Health has released a clinical decision-making support tool: [Guidance for Special Populations: Pregnancy and Breastfeeding](#) that can be used by health care providers to counsel patients to help them make an informed decision about the COVID-19 vaccination during pregnancy and breastfeeding.

The [Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada](#) has also released a statement regarding pregnant woman with COVID-19 in ICUs in Ontario. At this time, pregnancy is identified as an At-Risk health condition, eligible for vaccination in Phase 2 after Highest and High-risk health conditions. SMDHU is continuing to monitor provincial eligibility criteria and will notify health care providers should this be updated.

### **Additional Information**

For more information about the rollout of COVID-19 vaccine in our area, please refer to the [SMDHU COVID-19 Vaccine and Immunization Webpages](#).

For more information on the province's three-phased vaccine distribution implementation plan, please visit [COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario](#).

There are a number of COVID-19 resources and documents available through our Health Professional Portal at [www.smdhu.org/hportal](http://www.smdhu.org/hportal) as well as through [Public Health Ontario](#) and the [Government of Ontario](#).