

Vaccine Confidence Info Bulletin

November 30 | 2021 | Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC)

Providing relevant and timely information on vaccines to health care providers and public health decision makers to support vaccine confidence.

Thank you for being a trusted source for vaccine information in communities across Canada.

Trending Topic

[Health Canada approves the Pfizer BioNTech \(Comirnaty®\) COVID-19 vaccine for use in children between the ages of 5 and 11, on November 19, 2021](#)

The Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) released guidance from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) on the use of the pediatric formulation of the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) COVID-19 vaccine in children 5-11 years of age. These recommendations are based on current scientific evidence and NACI's expert opinion, including ethical considerations related to COVID-19 vaccination in children. For in-depth details on NACI's recommendation, including background and studies used, refer to [NACI's guidance on COVID-19 vaccines for children aged 5-11.](#)

[Summary of NACI's recommendations for Pfizer BioNTech \(Comirnaty®\) mRNA COVID-19 vaccine in children 5-11 years of age:](#)

A complete series of the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) may be offered to children 5-11 years of age who do not have contraindications to the vaccine, with a dosing interval of at least 8 weeks between the first and second dose.

See below for resources to help pain management and vaccination in children.

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Important Clinical Information

- At this time, NACI recommends that children receive the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) at least 14 days before or after another vaccine.
 - This is a precaution to help to determine if a side effect that may arise is due to the COVID-19 vaccine or another vaccine.
 - There may be circumstances when a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and another vaccine need to be given at the same time.
- Children who receive the pediatric formulation of the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) for their first dose who turn 12 by the time of their second dose may receive the adolescent/adult formulation of the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (30 mcg) to complete their primary series. If a child who has turned 12 by the time of their second dose receives the pediatric formulation (10 mcg), their series should still be considered valid and complete.
- Children with previous COVID-19 infection may be offered two doses of the vaccine once symptoms of acute illness have resolved and the child is no longer considered infectious, based on current criteria. Children with a history of MIS-C may be vaccinated once they have recovered or once it has been more than 90 days since diagnosis, whichever is longer.
 - For details on vaccine precautions and contraindications, refer to [NACI's guidance on COVID-19 vaccines for children aged 5-11.](#)
- Adults, including caregivers and youth who interact with children, should be vaccinated against COVID-19 to offer additional protection to children.
- Currently, the risk of myocarditis/pericarditis in children following immunization with the 10 mcg dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) COVID-19 vaccine is unknown. Safety surveillance data from individuals aged 12 and older does not suggest the risk of myocarditis/pericarditis following mRNA COVID-19 vaccination will necessarily be greater in children aged 5-11 years compared to older populations. Additionally, the impact of a reduced vaccine dose (10 mcg vs 30 mcg) is also unknown. Real-world evidence in large pediatric populations are required to provide risk estimates of myocarditis/pericarditis and any other adverse event that may occur in children aged 5-11 years at a frequency less often than 1 in 1,000.
- It is essential that children aged 5-11 years and their parents are supported and respected in their decisions regarding COVID-19 vaccinations for their children, whatever decisions they make, and are not stigmatised for accepting, or not accepting, the vaccination offer.
- Public health measures remain very important for preventing transmission of the COVID-19 virus in children. It is important that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, continue to follow recommended public health measures.

- For more in-depth details on NACI's recommendation, including background and studies used, refer to [NACI's guidance on COVID-19 vaccines for children aged 5-11](#).

Featured Resources

Guidance on vaccination pain management for children

- [Guidance for health care providers on vaccination pain management for children](#).
- [Information for parents on what to expect before, during and after their child's vaccination appointment](#).

[The CARD system from Immunize Canada's website](#)

- A patient-centered, evidence-based system for coping with needle fear and anxiety.

PHAC Webinars for Health Care Providers

PHAC, in collaboration with the Canadian Vaccination Evidence Resource and Exchange Centre (CANVax) and the National Collaborating Centre for Infectious Diseases (NCCID), offers expert-led webinars focused on providing health care providers with clinical guidance related to key vaccine topics.

View newly released webinars:

- [Preparing for pediatric COVID-19 immunization and adult booster doses](#)
- [Revaccination with COVID-19 vaccines after anaphylaxis](#)
- [Contraindications to COVID-19 vaccines](#)
- [Seasonal Influenza Immunization 2021-2022](#)

Stay tuned for webinar registration(s) opening soon or video(s) being posted soon:

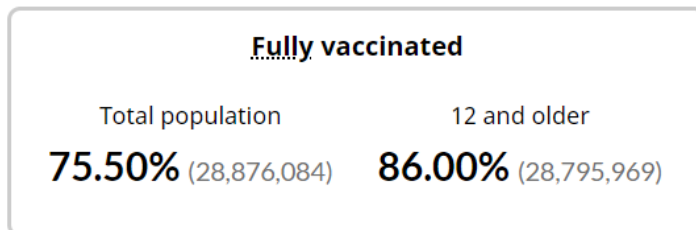
- Additional COVID-19 vaccine doses for individuals who are immunocompromised – early December
- Interim guidance on booster COVID-19 vaccine doses – early December
- COVID-19 vaccine for pediatric use in Canada – mid December

Subscribe to [The CANVax Boost](#) newsletter and [NCCID News Alerts](#) to stay up-to-date on upcoming PHAC webinars.

COVID-19 Vaccination in Canada

The Public Health Agency of Canada is your trusted source for information and resources to support you in promoting COVID-19 vaccination in your communities. High rates of vaccine coverage across the country can help to prevent the spread of the virus, protect people from severe illness and help everyone return to normal activities. We are all working hard in this context to close the gap in vaccine coverage among eligible Canadians. To this end, PHAC is pleased to share the below updates and resources to support you in promoting COVID-19 vaccination within your communities.

COVID-19 Vaccination Rates in Canada



As of November 26, 2021 with data up to and including November 20, 2021.¹

What's New from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI)

Pfizer BioNTech (Comirnaty®) mRNA COVID-19 vaccine in children 5-11 years of age

- See a summary of NACI's guidance under "[Trending Topic](#)" above.
- A complete series of the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) may be offered to children 5-11 years of age who do not have contraindications to the vaccine, with a dosing interval of at least 8 weeks between the first and second dose.

Revaccination with COVID-19 vaccines after anaphylaxis

- Based on emerging evidence, NACI has updated its guidance on revaccination with a COVID-19 vaccine of someone who previously had a severe, immediate allergic reaction (e.g., anaphylaxis) following a previous dose of a COVID-19 vaccine.
- **NACI now recommends that it is possible for people who experienced a severe immediate allergic reaction after a first dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine to safely receive future doses of the same or another mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.**
- In studies, revaccination in a controlled setting was safe and well tolerated with predominantly no, or mild, reactions after revaccination. Emerging evidence also suggests that many of these severe immediate allergic reactions following mRNA COVID-19 vaccines are likely not IgE-mediated and therefore have a low risk of recurrence after future vaccine doses.

¹<https://health-infobase.canada.ca/covid-19/vaccination-coverage/>

- **Prior to revaccination, consultation with an allergist or other appropriate physician should be sought.**
- The decision to revaccinate should be based on a risk-benefit conversation with the individual's healthcare provider, and informed consent should be given. These individuals should be observed for 30 minutes after being revaccinated.
- For a more complete explanation of the evidence and rationale for the recommendation, and for information about previous severe, immediate allergic reactions to vaccine components, see the [NACI recommendation updated October 22, 2021](#).

Additional COVID-19 vaccine doses for individuals who are immunocompromised

- NACI notes that evidence to date has shown that some individuals who are immunocompromised, including those receiving immunosuppressive therapies, may have a lower immune response to COVID-19 vaccines compared to the general population. Recent studies show that some individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised who did not respond to, or who had a reduced immune response, after two doses of an mRNA vaccine can have an increased immune response after a third dose of an mRNA vaccine.
- Individuals in the authorized age groups who are moderately or severely immunocompromised:
 - should receive 3 doses of an authorized mRNA vaccine if they have not yet been immunized; or
 - should receive an additional dose of an authorized mRNA vaccine if they have previously received a 1- or 2- dose complete primary series, including those who received a mixed vaccine schedule.

Interim guidance on booster COVID-19 vaccine doses

- At this time, NACI strongly recommends that populations at highest risk of waning protection following their primary series and at highest risk of severe COVID-19 illness should be offered a booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after completing their primary series. These populations include:
 - Adults living in long-term care or other congregate settings that provide care for seniors ([as recommended by NACI on September 28, 2021](#))
 - Adults living in long-term care or other congregate settings that provide care for seniors ([as recommended by NACI on September 28, 2021](#))
 - Adults 80 years of age and older
- NACI also recommends that other key populations who may be at increased risk of lower protection over time since vaccination, increased risk of severe illness, or who are essential for maintaining health system capacity, may be offered a booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine at least 6 months after completing their primary series. These populations include:

- Adults 70 to 79 years of age;
- People who received two doses of the AstraZeneca Vaxzevria™/COVISHIELD vaccine or one dose of the Janssen vaccine;
- Adults in or from First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities; and
- Adults who are frontline healthcare workers who have direct in-person contact with patients and who were vaccinated with a very short interval.

Featured Resources

[Quick reference guide - COVID-19 vaccines](#)

- A guidance document for health care providers, providing a summary of recommendations on the use of COVID-19 vaccines, based mainly on NACI recommendations, and guidance on managing COVID-19 vaccine administration errors or deviations.

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination

What's New

[Co-administration of seasonal flu vaccine and COVID-19 vaccines](#)

- NACI recommends that the influenza vaccine should continue to be offered to anyone 6 months and older who does not have contraindications to the vaccine. All seasonal influenza vaccines, including live-attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV), may be given at the same time as, or at any time before or after administration of other vaccines, including COVID-19 vaccines.
- At this time, NACI recommends that children receive the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty®) COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) at least 14 days before or after another vaccine. For more information on co-administration refer to [NACI's guidance on COVID-19 vaccines for children aged 5-11](#).

Featured Resources

[Flu vaccine awareness resources](#)

- Find posters, handouts, social media accessories and a mobile guide on seasonal influenza vaccination for use within your practices and communities.

Community Spotlight

Putting the spotlight on innovative projects and best practices from communities across Canada.

[Immunization Partnership Fund Recipient: Canada Safety Council's School-Based Initiative](#)

PHAC's [Immunization Partnership Fund \(IPF\)](#) provides funding for projects that improve access to vaccines and encourage vaccine acceptance and uptake. Funded projects build capacity of health care providers as vaccinators and vaccination promoters; support community-based COVID-19 education, outreach, and vaccine promotion; and build capacity for evidence-based vaccine communication.

With support from PHAC's IPF, [Canada Safety Council](#) has developed a vaccine education and awareness program, called the Elmer Vaccine Education and Awareness Program, for school and education settings across Canada. Program materials, including an interactive video course, have been tailored for students of all ages in elementary grades, and are available to assist educators to engage both students and their families on the facts about COVID-19 vaccination. [Click here to access the free program materials for the Elmer Vaccine Education and Awareness Program.](#)

Stay Current

[Canadian Immunization Guide](#)

[Subscribe](#) to receive information regarding updates to the Canadian Immunization Guide (CIG) and National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommendations, statements, and literature reviews.

The CIG is a comprehensive resource on immunization developed based on recommendations and statements of expert advisory committees, including the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and the Committee to Advise on Tropical Medicine and Travel (CATMAT).

[National Advisory Committee on Immunization: Statements & Publications](#)

Visit the [NACI Statements & Publications](#) site to stay up-to-date on the latest guidance.

NACI makes recommendations for the use of vaccines currently or newly approved for use in humans in Canada, including the identification of groups at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases for whom vaccination should be targeted.

PHAC Vaccine Confidence Program

- Do you have questions or comments?
- Do you have a success story or best practice to share with your colleagues across the country?
- Do you wish to be added to the distribution list to receive the PHAC Vaccine Confidence Info Bulletin directly?

Email us: vaccination@phac-aspc.gc.ca

Please note that any medical questions should be directed to your local health care provider and any urgent medical question should be directed to 911 or your local emergency department.