

COVID-19 Immunization Update

For Health Care Providers in Oxford County, Elgin County,
and the City of St. Thomas



October 1, 2021

An Update from Dr. Joyce Lock, Medical Officer of Health

Please share with staff as appropriate.

What You Need to Know This Week

1. NACI UPDATE: TIMING FOR COVID-19 AND OTHER VACCINATIONS

- On September 28, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) updates its recommendation on timing of COVID-19 and non-COVID-19 vaccines administration.
- The previous recommendation to wait at least 28 days before and 14 days after a COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines is no longer necessary.
- Now, NACI recommends COVID-19 vaccines may be given at the same time as, or any time before or after, other vaccines, including live, non-live, adjuvanted, or unadjuvanted vaccines.
- View the full statement here ([link](#))

2. THIRD DOSES AND MEDICAL REFERRALS

- **Specific individuals and medical conditions are eligible for a third dose vaccination, [as outlined by the Ministry of Health](#).**
- **In summary:**
 - Those undergoing active treatment with the following categories of immunosuppressive therapies: anti-B cell therapies (monoclonal antibodies targeting CD19, CD20 and CD22), high-dose systemic corticosteroids, alkylating agents, antimetabolites, or tumor-necrosis factor (TNF) inhibitors and other biologic agents that are significantly immunosuppressive.
- For clarity, other biologic agents that are **significantly immunosuppressive** may represent a broad number of conditions; as such, **referring medical professionals are encouraged to use their own clinical judgment in referrals.**
- A referral note from a primary care provider or medical specialist is required for those eligible to obtain a third dose vaccination. Obtain a referral note here: ([link](#))

3. REPORTING ADVERSE EVENTS FROM COVID-19 VACCINES

- It is critical to monitor for and report adverse events following a COVID-19 immunization to your local public health unit. Prolonged side effects should also be considered.
- For guidance, refer to the Public Health Ontario [fact sheet on reporting adverse events](#).

4. REMINDER: BEGIN PREPARATION FOR 5–11-YEAR-OLD VACCINATIONS

- Anticipated Health Canada approval in December.
- Although this age cohort is not yet eligible for vaccination, the Province has indicated all regions begin preparations to welcome this cohort soon.
- **ACTION:** Public health units, pharmacy, and primary care are all advised to consider creative clinics and opportunities to reach this population when the time comes.

5. SWPH REGION VACCINATION RATES

- Data from the Ministry of Health as of September 30:
 - Percentage of SWPH 12+ population with at least one dose: 85.8%
 - Percentage of SWPH 12+ population with both doses: 80.6%
- Pregnant women remain a priority population for increased vaccination rates, as well as vulnerable populations including homeless and underhoused, and individuals who misuse substances.
- **ACTION:** Contact [Susan MacIsaac](#) if you have a recommended opportunity for pop-up or mobile clinics.

6. mRNA VACCINE AFTER SINOPHARM OR SINOVAC

- Individuals who received these vaccines are eligible for an mRNA dose in Ontario.
- Refer to the [Ministry's Guidance for Individuals Vaccinated Outside of Ontario or Canada](#).

7. PFIZER RECOMMENDED FOR ADULTS AGED 18-24

- On September 29, the [Chief Medical Officer of Health released a statement](#) advising the use of Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for individuals aged 18-24 instead of Moderna, effective immediately
- This is a direct result of Ontario's adverse events (AEFI) surveillance which saw an increase in very rare instances of myocarditis/pericarditis following vaccination with Moderna in this age cohort.
- **Individuals 18-24 can still accept Moderna by request and with informed consent.**

8. MANDATORY VACCINATION FOR LONG-TERM CARE HOME STAFF

- On October 1, Ontario announced COVID-19 vaccinations will be mandatory for all in-home staff, support workers, students, and volunteers at Long-Term Care Homes, by November 15, 2021.
- Valid medical exemptions are accepted.
- Refer to [the full news release](#) for details.