

# Updated: Questions and Answers for Patients: COVID-19 Vaccine Immunization through Ontario Pharmacies

This Questions and Answers document provides information to patients on the availability of COVID-19 Vaccine Immunization through Ontario pharmacies.

**Effective March 10, 2021**, the Government of Ontario is publicly funding COVID-19 vaccines for immunization at participating pharmacies in Ontario.

## 1. Who can get a COVID-19 vaccine at a pharmacy?

Individuals who live, work or study in Ontario or are visiting Ontario from another province / territory or another country may be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at a participating pharmacy. Eligibility criteria is expected to change as COVID-19 vaccine supply becomes available. For all vaccine doses, when eligibility is defined by age, individuals must be the respective age of eligibility on the day of the vaccine administration.

Please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent Executive Officer Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Eligibility”.

## 2. Questions intentionally deleted as of November 3, 2021 update.

## 3. Which pharmacy can provide me with the COVID-19 vaccine?

You can locate a participating pharmacy at [this link](#).

Please call ahead to the pharmacy to find out their booking procedures as some pharmacies may only administer vaccines by pre-booked appointment; while other pharmacies may choose to offer walk-in appointments.

## 4. What do I need to bring with me to the pharmacy to get my COVID-19 vaccine?

When you go to the pharmacy, you should provide a valid Ontario health card number. If you do not have an Ontario health card number, you may still receive a publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine using an alternate identification and providing your date of birth and contact information to the pharmacy.

Other forms of patient identification may include:

- Birth Certificate
- First Nations ID
- Passport
- MRN (Medical Record Number)
- Out of Province ID
- Driver's Licence

If arriving to the pharmacy for your second dose, it is recommended that you bring your Ministry of Health COVID-19 vaccine receipt that you would have received after receiving your first dose.

**5. If I received a first dose (or more than one dose) of a vaccine outside of Ontario or Canada, am I considered fully vaccinated and up to date?**

**Fully vaccinated:**

The ['fully vaccinated'](#) definition may continue to be used in some settings. In Ontario, an individual is considered fully vaccinated if they have received:

- The full series of a COVID-19 vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or any combination of such vaccines,
- One or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada, followed by one dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine authorized by Health Canada, or
- Three doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not authorized by Health Canada; and
- They received their final dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at least 14 days ago.

**Up to Date:**

Being 'up to date' means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including primary series doses and any booster dose(s) when eligible, within six months of your last dose.

**Doses outside of Canada:**

Individuals who received a COVID-19 vaccine outside of Ontario or Canada are required to provide proof, such as a vaccination receipt or certificate, to their [public health unit](#) in order to be registered in the system.

Once that process is complete, if an additional dose is required, these individuals will be able to book their subsequent dose appointment through the provincial booking system, public health units that use their own booking system or participating pharmacies and primary care settings at an interval that aligns with Ontario's vaccine strategy.

Individuals who received a COVID-19 vaccine outside of Ontario or Canada who contact their local Public Health Unit will have their COVID-19 vaccine history verified and uploaded

into the COVAX system. Depending on how many doses and which vaccines were previously administered (please refer to the [COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#) located on the ministry's [website](#)), pharmacies may administer an additional dose of an mRNA monovalent vaccine or a bivalent mRNA vaccine if applicable, if required to complete the vaccine series or as a booster.

## **6. Which COVID-19 vaccine is being offered by pharmacies?**

For the publicly funded COVID-19 vaccine immunization, pharmacists will be providing the COVID-19 vaccine that is available according to the [COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#) and most recent Executive Officer Notice entitled "Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Eligibility".

For the primary COVID-19 vaccine series, pharmacies are administering COVID-19 mRNA vaccines, namely, the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine (12+ formulation for ages 12+, and pediatric formulation for ages 5 – 11) as well as the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (for ages 6 months and over). Refer to Q # 13, 14 & 15 for more details on age criteria.

Novavax, Inc.'s Nuvaxovid™ COVID-19 vaccine, Medicago, Inc's Covifenz® COVID-19 vaccine, and viral vector COVID-19 vaccines such as AstraZeneca or Janssen COVID-19 vaccine (Johnson & Johnson) are available in Ontario in minimal quantities and managed by local public health units. They will only be offered to those who decline an mRNA vaccine or have contraindications to mRNA vaccines, and with informed consent.

For more information about COVID-19 vaccines, please refer to Public Health Ontario's website at this [link](#) and the ministry's COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet at this [link](#).

## **7. Are pharmacists prepared to provide COVID-19 vaccines? What quality standards will be followed?**

Pharmacists, registered pharmacy students, interns and pharmacy technicians are authorized to administer the COVID-19 vaccine provided they have the appropriate injection training, have registered this training with the Ontario College of Pharmacists (OCP), and are working at a pharmacy that has entered into an agreement with the Ministry of Health to provide COVID-19 vaccines.

## **8. What happens before and after the vaccine is administered by the pharmacy?**

The pharmacist will provide details on the process before the COVID-19 vaccine immunization begins, as well as answer any other questions you may have.

Patients, or their substitute decision-makers, will be required to provide consent for the COVID-19 vaccine administration and related data collection. Pharmacy staff will provide you with written vaccine information and after-care instructions as well as a written receipt with the pharmacy contact information that you received the vaccine, including a scheduled

time and date and instructions for your second dose, if applicable, a pharmacy may also provide an electronic receipt containing this information.

**Individuals must keep their receipt for their vaccination in a safe place and bring it to their appointment for the subsequent dose of the vaccine.**

Patients are asked to wait for 15 minutes after receiving their vaccine to ensure they are feeling well. Longer waiting times of 30 minutes may be recommended if there is a concern about a possible vaccine allergy or adverse event following injection (AEFI). Note: This wait time may be shorter for booster doses if previous doses showed no AEFI concerns.

Individuals are advised to continue to follow the recommendation of public health officials to prevent the spread of COVID-19, which include wearing a mask, staying at least 2 meters from others and limiting/avoiding contact with others outside their household.

### **9. For a multi-dose primary vaccine series, what happens after receiving the first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?**

After the first dose, the pharmacy will schedule an appointment for your second dose. Individuals are strongly advised to return to the same pharmacy location for their second dose and follow the instructions provided by their pharmacist to ensure they receive the second dose at the right time. The pharmacy will contact you should there be a need to reschedule the appointment for a later date for reasons such as vaccine supply or discontinuation of a vaccine.

Patients can refer to the ministry's [COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet](#) for more information on each vaccine.

### **10. What if I cannot make it on the day of my scheduled appointment?**

If you need to reschedule the arrangements made for your appointment, please contact the pharmacy as soon as possible for scheduling an alternate day/time.

The pharmacy staff is required to schedule second dose appointments (if applicable) and give you instructions on how you can reach them, as well as how they will reach you should there be a need to reschedule due to issues such as vaccine supply.

### **11. My first dose was an AstraZeneca vaccine which is no longer available for first dose administration. What should I do about my second dose?**

If your first dose was the AstraZeneca or COVISHIELD vaccine by the pharmacy, please contact the pharmacy for information on your second dose.

Individuals who received their first dose of AstraZeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine should receive one of the mRNA vaccines (Pfizer [12+ formulation] or Moderna) as their second dose (unless there is a contraindication) and should receive their second dose at an interval

of at least 8 weeks. Please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Eligibility**” for further information about eligibility criteria for second doses administered in pharmacies, including vaccine mixing.

**12. For a multi-dose primary vaccine series, can I receive a different COVID-19 vaccine as my second dose?**

Yes. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) is now [recommending](#) the interchangeability of vaccines (or vaccine mixing) which means a patient could receive one vaccine product for the first dose and a different vaccine product for the second dose to complete the two-dose vaccine series.

Individuals who have received only their first dose of the Astra Zeneca/COVISHIELD vaccine and who have not yet received a second dose should receive an mRNA (Pfizer (12+ formulation or Moderna) vaccine for their second dose unless contraindicated.

The Nuvaxovid™ COVID-19 vaccine and the Covifenz® COVID-19 vaccine 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 to complete the primary series.

Individuals who received a first dose of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna) should be offered the same mRNA vaccine for their second dose. If the same mRNA vaccine is not readily available\* or unknown, another mRNA vaccine can be considered interchangeable and should be offered to complete the vaccine series. Note: An mRNA vaccine followed by a second AstraZeneca vaccine is not an acceptable interchangeable vaccine series (subject to limited exceptions where an individual has an AEFI or allergy<sup>1</sup>). \*Note, readily available means easily available at the time of vaccination without delay or vaccine wastage.

Please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Eligibility**” for further information about eligibility criteria for second doses administered in pharmacies, including vaccine mixing.

**13. Which of the Pfizer vaccines (12 + formulation or pediatric formulation for ages 5 to 11) is recommended for children who are 11 years of age and turning 12 by the time they are eligible for their second dose or booster dose?**

Children should receive the formulation that is recommended for their age at the time of administration. For example, children who received the Pediatric Pfizer vaccine (10mcg) for

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<sup>1</sup> Please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Eligibility”.

their first dose and who have turned 12 by the time the second dose is due (i.e. 8 weeks after their first dose) may receive the Pfizer vaccine (12+ formulation with 30mcg) that is authorized for individuals age 12 and over to complete their primary series.

Note: At this time, only the Pediatric Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10mcg) is authorized as a booster dose for children aged 5 – 11 years.

#### **14. What is the recommendation for children who are 5 years old? Which COVID-19 vaccine should they receive?**

Based on [NACI recommendations](#), use of pediatric Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) is preferred to the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (25 mcg). The Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (25 mcg) may be given to children 5 years of age as an alternative with informed consent and discussion of risks and benefits with the health care provider.

Children who have received Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (25 mcg) for a previous dose and turn 6 years of age prior to completing their primary series are recommended to receive Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (50 mcg) to complete their primary series. If the primary series was completed with Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (25 mcg) or with Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg), the dose should be considered valid and the series complete.

Note: At this time, only the Pediatric Pfizer BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (10mcg) is authorized as a booster dose for children ages 5 – 11 years.

#### **15. For a multi-dose vaccine series, what should I do about my second dose if I am 12 years of age or older and my first dose was an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna)?**

Individuals are likely to be offered the same mRNA vaccine for their second dose, however they are able to receive either Pfizer (12+ formulation) or Moderna as their second dose.

Based on advice from the Ontario Immunization Advisory Committee , and in alignment with [NACI](#), the Ministry of Health has issued a **preferential recommendation for the use of Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine for individuals age 5 - 29 years of age if receiving a primary series dose, or 5 – 17 years of age if receiving a booster dose.** This recommendation stems from an observed increase in the number of reports in Ontario of myocarditis/pericarditis following vaccination with Moderna relative to Pfizer-BioNTech in children, adolescents and young adults, particularly among males. Although risk of myocarditis/pericarditis with the Moderna (50 mcg) vaccine in children 6 to 11 years of age is unknown, with a primary series in adolescents and young adults the rare risk of myocarditis/pericarditis with Moderna (100 mcg) was higher than with Pfizer-BioNTech (30 mcg). See [COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#) for more details on administering to special populations.

Note: Informed consent is required for those age 5 to 29 who wish to receive the Moderna vaccine, as it is whenever a pharmacy administers a vaccine.

For more information about the administration of second doses in pharmacies please refer to the [ministry website](#) for the most recent EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – **Eligibility**”

**16. For a multi-dose vaccine series, am I able to re-schedule my second dose based on the Ministry’s announcements about accelerating second doses for individuals who received first doses with an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna)?**

At this time, accelerated second doses is no longer recommended. There is emerging evidence that longer intervals between the first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines result in more robust and durable immune response and higher vaccine effectiveness. See [NACI’s statement](#) for more information.

Note: Anyone, can get their second dose earlier than 8 weeks if needed, with informed consent.

Individuals who are eligible for a second dose may wish to contact their pharmacy, where they received their first dose to book (or re-book) an appointment for their second dose at the recommended interval of 8 weeks. Or, individuals may access the [provincial booking system](#) to search for another pharmacy that is offering the specific vaccine for their second dose. Second doses can also be booked at other locations (without a first appointment) in the provincial booking system.

If individuals are booking an appointment at a different pharmacy, they are reminded to cancel any previously scheduled doses that they may have already booked either with the other pharmacy or through the provincial booking system.

**17. What is the difference between a third dose and a booster dose?**

The intent of a **booster dose** is to restore protection that may have decreased over time to a level that is no longer deemed sufficient in individuals who initially responded adequately to a complete primary vaccine series. This is distinguished from the intent of a **third dose** which might be added to the standard primary vaccine series with the aim of enhancing the immune response and establishing an adequate level of protection for individuals who developed no or sub-optimal immune response to a 2-dose primary series.

Note: the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine series involves a single dose. However, individuals who received the single dose Janssen vaccine are eligible for a supplementary or booster

dose in accordance with the EO Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Eligibility. References in the remainder of this document to individuals who have already received two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine shall be interpreted to include individuals who received the single dose Janssen vaccine. In addition, for immunocompromised individuals who received the single dose Janssen vaccine, references in the remainder of this document to a third dose shall be interpreted to mean a second dose.

**18. I am a resident living in a retirement home or other congregate setting. Can I get my vaccine dose at my place of residence?**

Yes, provided that you meet eligibility criteria for the vaccine, a pharmacy may administer your vaccine dose at your retirement home or other congregate setting. However, the retirement home or congregate setting in collaboration with the public health unit and the community pharmacy will need to coordinate the administration of any vaccine dose.

Pharmacy staff may also administer vaccine doses to staff, support workers, essential caregivers, volunteers, and contractors who are working at the retirement home or other congregate setting, provided that these individuals meet applicable eligibility criteria for the vaccine dose and pharmacy staff are on-site administering the vaccine to residents.

**19. I am a resident living in a long-term care home. Can I get my vaccine dose at my long-term care home?**

Yes, provided that you meet eligibility criteria for the vaccine, a pharmacy may administer your vaccine dose at your long-term care home. However, the long-term care home in collaboration with the public health unit and the community pharmacy will need coordinate the administration of any vaccine dose.

Pharmacy staff may also administer vaccine doses to staff, support workers, essential caregivers, volunteers, and contractors who are working at the long-term care home, provided that these individuals meet applicable eligibility criteria for the vaccine dose and pharmacy staff are on-site administering the vaccine to residents.

## 20. I am an immunocompromised patient. Can I get a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine at a pharmacy?

Yes. Pharmacies may provide a third dose as part of a 3-dose primary series of a COVID-19 vaccine to certain patients 6 months of age and older (or 18 years of age and older, in the case of Nuvaxovid™ or viral vector vaccines for patients who have a contraindication or unwilling to receive an mRNA vaccine or, in the case of Covifenz® the person (age 18 to 64 years of age)) receiving the third dose in a primary series is unable or unwilling to receive an mRNA vaccine) who are **immunocompromised** provided they give the pharmacy a copy of a referral letter from their health care provider. Alternatively, you can present a recent prescription label or prescription receipt to the pharmacy, or the pharmacy can refer to your medication profile, and cross-reference the medication shown on those documents with the list of immunosuppressive medications that qualifies individuals to receive a third dose.

If you present a prescription of a medication that is not listed on the [COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#), you may be directed to your health care provider to receive a referral form/letter for a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.

As [announced](#) by the ministry, if you are in one of the immunocompromised population groups identified by the ministry, you are eligible for a 3<sup>rd</sup> dose. For infants/children aged 6 months to 5 years who are immunocompromised, the Moderna COVID-19 vaccine (0.10mg/mL) may be given. For children ages 5-11 who are immunocompromised, the pediatric Pfizer-BioNTech (10mcg) vaccine should be given. The groups include:

- Individuals receiving dialysis (hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis)
- Individuals receiving active<sup>2</sup> treatment (e.g., chemotherapy, targeted therapies, immunotherapy) for solid tumour or hematologic malignancies
- Recipients of solid-organ transplant and taking immunosuppressive therapy
- Recipients of chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-T-cell therapy or hematopoietic stem cell transplant (within 2 years of transplantation or taking immunosuppression therapy).
- Individuals with moderate to severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome).
- Individuals with HIV with prior AIDS defining illness **or** prior CD4 count  $\leq$  200/mm<sup>3</sup> **or** prior CD4 fraction  $\leq$  15% **or** (in children 5-11 years) perinatally acquired HIV infection

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<sup>2</sup> Active treatment includes patients who have completed treatment within 3 months. Active treatment is defined as chemotherapy, targeted therapies, immunotherapy, and excludes individuals receiving therapy that does not suppress the immune system (e.g. solely hormonal therapy or radiation therapy). See Ontario Health/Cancer Care Ontario's [Frequently Asked Questions](#) for more information.

- Individuals receiving active treatment with the following categories of immunosuppressive therapies: anti-B cell therapies<sup>3</sup> (monoclonal antibodies targeting CD19, CD20 and CD22), high-dose systemic corticosteroids (refer to the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#) for suggested definition of high dose steroids), alkylating agents, antimetabolites, or tumor-necrosis factor (TNF) inhibitors and other biologic agents that are significantly immunosuppressive.

Individuals in the above identified immunocompromised population groups can receive their third dose if at least 2 months (56 days) have passed since receiving their second dose or at an interval of at least 28 days as directed by their health care provider.

As noted, a referral letter from the health care provider is required for administration of the third vaccine dose in the pharmacy. Alternatively, you can ask your pharmacist to check your medication profile or you can present a prescription label or receipt to the pharmacy to see if you qualify.

## **21. Are COVID-19 booster doses being offered to any groups in the community?**

Yes. See below.

### **Eligibility Criteria for non-Bivalent Booster Dose Administration after a primary series**

Individuals aged 12 years or older are eligible for a booster dose, if at least 6 months (168 days)\* have passed since they received their last dose.

- \* Note: With informed consent, individuals aged 12 or older may receive the booster dose in less than 6 months as long as 3 months have passed since they received their last dose.

Individuals aged 5 to 11 years, are eligible for a booster dose, if at least 6 months (168 days) have passed since completing a primary COVID-19 vaccine series, including those who are moderately to severely immunocompromised who have completed a 3-dose primary vaccine series<sup>4</sup>),

- Note: With informed consent, individuals aged 5 to 11 years may receive their booster dose in less than 6 months (168 days) as long as 3 months have passed since completing their primary COVID-19 vaccine series.

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<sup>3</sup> Active treatment for patients receiving B-cell depleting therapy includes patients who have completed treatment within 12 months

<sup>4</sup> Individuals (12 years of age and older) who were receiving active treatment necessitating a three dose primary series, are eligible for a booster dose, even if not receiving active treatment currently.

- Only the Pediatric Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine (orange cap) is authorized as a booster dose for individuals aged 5 to 11 years.

### Eligibility Criteria for Bivalent Booster Dose Administration after a primary series

As of September 12, 2022:

The following high-risk groups are eligible to receive a fall COVID-19 bivalent (Moderna) booster dose, if at least six months (168 days), have passed since the individual's last dose, regardless of the number of booster doses received:

- Residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, Elder Care Lodges, and adults living in other congregate settings that provide assisted-living and health services
- Individuals aged 70 years and older
- Individuals who are 12 years and older with moderately to severely immunocompromising conditions
  - For adolescents 12-17 years of age with moderately to severely immunocompromising conditions, a booster dose of the bivalent Moderna COVID-19 vaccine may be offered off-label based on clinical discretion.
- Adults 18 years and older who identify as First Nations, Inuit or Métis and their non-Indigenous household members aged 18 years and older
- Pregnant individuals aged 18 years and older
- Health care workers aged 18 years and older

As of September 26, 2022:

- Individuals aged 18 years and older may receive a fall COVID-19 bivalent (Moderna) booster dose, if at least six months (168 days), have passed since the individual's last dose, regardless of the number of booster doses received.

**Note:** With informed consent, individuals listed above may receive the fall COVID-19 bivalent (Moderna) booster dose in less than 6 months as long as 3 months have passed since they received their last dose.

If the bivalent Omicron-containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccine is not readily available, an original mRNA COVID-19 vaccine should be offered to ensure timely protection.

**22. Are individuals who are eligible to receive a third or booster dose of an mRNA vaccine receiving the full dose?**

For individuals who are eligible to receive a booster dose in fall 2022, NACI recommends that the authorized dose of a bivalent Omicron-containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccine should be offered, subject to eligibility rules in the most recent Executive Officer Notice entitled “Administration of the Publicly Funded COVID-19 Vaccines in Ontario Pharmacies – Eligibility”. If the bivalent Omicron-containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccine is not readily available, an original mRNA COVID-19 vaccine should be offered to ensure timely protection. The Moderna Bivalent COVID-19 vaccine 0.10mg/mL is a 50mcg dose.

**23. Can I get my COVID-19 vaccine at or around the same time as the flu vaccine?**

The COVID-19 vaccines may be given with, or at any time before or after, other vaccines, including the influenza vaccine with the exception of children aged 6 months to under 5 years of age.

For children who are 6 months to under 5 years of age, it is recommended to wait for a period of at least 14 days BEFORE or AFTER the administration of another vaccine before administering a COVID-19 vaccine to prevent erroneous attribution of an AEFI to one particular vaccine or the other. However, this suggested minimum waiting period between vaccines is precautionary and therefore concomitant administration or a shortened interval between COVID-19 vaccines and other vaccines may be warranted on an individual basis in some circumstances. These include:

- when there is a risk of the individual being unable to complete an immunization series due to the limited access to health services or being unlikely to return at a later date;
- when an individual may not return to receive a seasonal influenza vaccine;
- when another vaccine is required for post-exposure prophylaxis;
- when individuals require accelerated vaccination schedules prior to immunosuppressive therapy or transplant; and
- at the clinical discretion of the healthcare provider

For those individuals age 5 years and older who are eligible for co-administration, if given by injection at the same time, separate limbs should be used if possible. Alternatively, the injections may be administered into the same muscle separated by at least 2.5 cm (1”). Different immunization equipment (needle and syringe) must be used for each vaccine.

Please see [COVID-19 Vaccine Guidance](#) for more information.

This is not medical advice. Please speak to your health care provider for information about your situation.

**24. When is it recommended that an entire vaccine series be re-initiated?**

It is recommended that a re-vaccination with a repeat COVID-19 vaccine primary series (plus booster dose, if applicable) be initiated post-transplantation for hematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT), hematopoietic cell transplants (HCT) (autologous or allogeneic), and recipients of CAR-T-cell therapy given the loss of immunity following therapy or transplant.<sup>5</sup> [Optimal timing for re-immunization](#) should be determined on a case-by-case basis in consultation with the clinical team.

A re-vaccination series includes first, second, third and (if applicable) booster dose intervals based on a referral letter from a health care provider.

**25. How long am I required to wait before getting my COVID-19 vaccine if I was infected with SARS-CoV-2?**

At this time, [NACI](#) recommends that individuals who have been infected with SARS-CoV-2 before starting or completing their primary vaccine series (i.e., after their first dose) may receive their first or next dose 8 weeks after symptoms have started or after testing positive (if no symptoms were experienced).

Individuals 5 years of age and older who are eligible<sup>6</sup> to receive a booster dose and who are infected with COVID-19 after their primary series (but before their booster dose), are recommended to receive their booster dose at least 3 months after symptom onset or positive test (if asymptomatic) but 6 months may provide better immune response. As per [NACI](#), emerging evidence indicates that a longer interval between SARS-CoV-2 infection and vaccination is associated with improved antibody responses to COVID-19 vaccines. With informed consent, individuals may receive a booster dose once they are no longer infectious (asymptomatic and have completed their isolation) and are otherwise eligible for the booster dose.

**26. Where can I get more information?**

For more information related to COVID-19 and the service of vaccine immunization, talk to your health care provider, or visit the following webpages:

**COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario:** <https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario>

**COVID-19 vaccine information:** [www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/vaccines](http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/vaccines)

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<sup>5</sup> As per the [Canadian Immunization Guideline](#), HSCT recipients should be viewed as vaccine naïve (i.e. never immunized) and require re-immunization after transplant.

<sup>6</sup> Individuals who are 12 to 17 years old are eligible to receive a booster dose if at least 6 months have passed since completing their primary vaccine series.

COVID-19 Resources: [www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/public-resources](http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/diseases-and-conditions/infectious-diseases/respiratory-diseases/novel-coronavirus/public-resources)