

Ministry of Health

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February 16, 2023

MEMORANDUM

TO: Public Health Units, Pharmacies and other COVID-19 Vaccine Administrators

**FROM: Dr. Fareen Karachiwalla
Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health**

RE: COVID-19 Vaccine – Moderna Supply for 6 months – 5 years

The purpose of this memo is to provide an update on the supply of Infant Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine (6 months to less than 5 years of age). Beginning March 9, 2023, there is expected to be a temporary interruption in the supply of this product which is anticipated to last 6 weeks.

In light of this, the options below may be considered though clinical discretion based on individual circumstances is advised.

Individuals wishing to receive a 2nd or 3rd dose during the time of the anticipated interruption in supply:

Three options can be outlined for those in need of a subsequent dose of infant Moderna product:

1. **Delay receipt of next dose until supply is restored:** this is a feasible and safe option. Note that a delayed dose is valid and does not require a repeated dose.
2. **Provide subsequent dose prior to March 9, 2023** (*as long as the minimal interval of 28 days is met*): a shortened interval may be preferred in some circumstances, such as for individuals who are immunocompromised or require immunization prior to travel.

- 3. Provide a Pfizer-BioNTech dose (applicable to those who may present to a clinic/walk in during the time where no infant Moderna is available or prefer a dose during this interval).** Use of the same product (i.e., Moderna or Pfizer-BioNTech) to complete the primary series in this age group continues to be preferred wherever possible. However, note that if in this age group, different products are used (i.e., both Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech), doses are still considered valid. In the situation where both products are used, completion of the primary series requires three doses. While this may be less optimal, if an individual faces barriers returning to clinic in the short term, providing a dose using a mixed series is a better alternative to a missed vaccine opportunity.

Email communication outlining options will be sent out by the Ministry of Health to parents and/or guardians of individuals who are eligible or will be eligible to receive a 2nd dose during this time so they can make decisions accordingly and avoid presenting to a clinic for a Moderna dose during the expected gap in supply.

Individuals wishing to receive a 1st dose

Moderna can continue to be offered this month and at any time outside of the expected temporary interruption in supply. It can be a preferred option for many, given the higher likelihood of series completion for a two-dose series vs three dose series (of Pfizer-BioNTech). The provincial booking site will be updated to include language around the expected temporary gap in supply for those wishing to receive a 1st dose so they can plan accordingly. Public health units, pharmacies and other vaccine administrators are encouraged to share this messaging on their own booking sites and portals.

For those who may present to a clinic (e.g. walk ins) during the time of a gap in supply or prefer initiating a primary series during this time specifically, the Pfizer-BioNTech product is available and can be used (though it is a three-dose series).

Thank you for your continued dedication and commitment to help protect the health and well-being of Ontarians through vaccination against COVID-19.

Sincerely,



Dr. Fareen Karachiwalla, MD, MPH, CCFP, FRCPC
Associate Chief Medical Officer of Health, Public Health