

People at higher risk of serious outcomes from COVID-19 are recommended to increase their protection against COVID-19 with a spring booster dose:

- Adults 65 years of age or older
- Adults (18+) living in long-term care homes, retirement homes, or other congregate settings for seniors or individuals with complex care needs
- Indigenous adults 55 years of age or older, as well as non-Indigenous household members 55+
- Adults (18+) who are moderately to severely immunocompromised
- People who are pregnant

Anyone 5+ who has **not** received a COVID-19 booster since September 1, 2022 should get a booster dose this spring. Outside of these groups, **fall boosters (received on or after September 1, 2022) will continue to protect people throughout the spring.**

When should people in these groups get their spring booster dose?

They should get a spring booster dose at least 6 months (168 days) after their last dose (or COVID-19 infection; see below). The date of the last COVID-19 vaccine dose can be checked at ontario.ca/get-proof. Call the Health Unit at 807-625-5900 if you cannot find a record or need help.

What if they recently had a COVID-19 infection?

The recommended interval between a COVID-19 infection and a booster dose is 6 months (168 days). Evidence shows that a longer time interval between infection and the next dose leads to longer lasting protection. Has it been less than 6 months? Talk to a health care provider.

What kind of vaccine should the spring booster dose be?

The spring booster should be a bivalent COVID-19 vaccine. Bivalent Moderna Spikevax and Pfizer Cominarty vaccines are available. These vaccines target both the original strain of COVID-19 and either the BA.1 or BA.4/5 Omicron variants.

Is the vaccine safe? Are there side effects?

Bivalent vaccines are safe for people who are older or who have serious health conditions (heart or lung problems, diabetes, high blood pressure, or a weak immune system). Those taking treatments that impact their immune systems should talk to their health care provider about when to get a booster for the best immune response.

Most side effects are mild to moderate and last 1 to 3 days. Some people get redness and swelling where they were vaccinated. Other common reactions include chills, joint pain or muscle aches, headache, and/or mild fever. Contact a health care provider if the reaction is serious OR lasts longer than 3 days.

Where can people get spring booster doses?

- Local pharmacies (*contact to confirm*)
- Health care providers (*contact to confirm*)
- Thunder Bay District Health Unit (TBDHU) vaccine clinics
 - Visit [TBDHU.COM/vaxclinics](https://tbdhu.com/vaxclinics) or call 807-625-5900 for clinic information.
 - Book through the Vaccine Contact Centre by calling 1-833-943-3900 (TTY for people who are deaf, hearing-impaired or speech-impaired: 1-866-797-0007; Help is available from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m., 7 days a week, in over 300 languages.)
- Through the Homebound Program if they cannot leave their residence; call 807-625-5900.

What if I have more questions?

Call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900.

Keeping up to date on COVID-19 vaccines is one of the most effective ways people can protect themselves, their families, and their communities against COVID-19.