

NEWS RELEASE

## Children Aged Five and Over Eligible for First Booster Shot

### Updated Public Health Guidance to Keep Ontarians Safe and Healthy This Fall

August 31, 2022

[Ministry of Health](#)

TORONTO — The Ontario government is expanding eligibility for COVID-19 first booster doses to children aged five to 11 to provide an extra layer of protection to those who need it ahead of the new school year.

As of 8:00 a.m. on Thursday, September 1, parents and caregivers of children aged five to 11 will be able to book an appointment for a paediatric COVID-19 booster dose through the [COVID-19 vaccination portal](#) or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900. Eligible individuals can also book an appointment directly through public health units that use their own booking systems, Indigenous-led vaccination clinics, participating health care providers and [participating pharmacies](#).

Eligible children can receive their first booster dose at a recommended interval of at least six months following their most recent dose. Parents with questions are encouraged to reach out to their health care provider, the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre or the SickKids COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service to make an informed choice for their family.

“Staying up to date on COVID-19 vaccinations and boosters is still the best tool to keep people healthy and out of hospitals, and to ensure Ontario’s economy stays open,” said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health. “Expanding access to boosters for ages five to 11 will give parents more opportunities to protect themselves, their families and their communities this fall as kids go back to school and as people are spending more time indoors.”

In anticipation of the approval of a bivalent COVID-19 vaccine, which may offer more targeted protection against the Omicron variants, the province is working with public health units and sector partners to make sure doses are ready to be administered once supply is received from the federal government. Details on timing and eligibility for the



bivalent COVID-19 vaccine will be communicated once Health Canada provides additional information and guidance.

In addition to the many tools already in place to keep Ontarians safe, on the recommendation of the Chief Medical Officer of Health, Ontario is updating public health guidance to manage COVID-19 during the respiratory illness season this fall. Some key highlights include:

1. If you are in contact with someone who has tested positive for COVID-19, continue to self-monitor for symptoms. There is no longer a need to isolate but you should wear a mask for 10 days when in public.
2. If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19 such as fever, cough, or runny nose, stay home from school, work and social events until your fever is gone and symptoms are improving, get a rapid antigen test or, if eligible, a PCR test. Wear a mask for 10 days after and avoid non-essential visits to high-risk individuals and settings.

“While we are updating our public health guidance, preventing COVID-19 and other infections is vital to keeping our families, schools and communities safe and healthy,” said Dr. Kieran Moore, Chief Medical Officer of Health. “I strongly encourage all Ontarians to take advantage of vaccine and booster doses that are recommended and available to them, which now includes the availability of a booster dose for children aged five to 11. Ontarians are also encouraged to protect one another by respecting public health guidance, including staying home and taking precautions if you are sick.”

With Omicron-specific vaccines on the horizon, expanded booster eligibility, continued access to testing and antivirals, and updated public health guidance, Ontarians have the tools they need to make the best decisions for themselves on how to stay safe, healthy and out of hospitals as the province continues its efforts to support the recovery and rebuilding of the health system.

## Quick Facts

1. Individuals aged 18 and over are eligible for their second booster dose at a recommended interval of five months since their first booster dose.
2. Individuals aged 12 and over who are immunocompromised are recommended to receive their second booster at an interval of six months since their first booster.
3. It is recommended that high-risk individuals including individuals aged 60 and over, First Nation, Inuit and Métis individuals and their non-Indigenous household members aged 18 and over, residents of long-term care homes, retirement homes, or Elder Care Lodges and older adults living in other congregate settings that provide assisted-living and health

- services, and [individuals who are moderately to severely immunocompromised](#) get their second booster as soon as possible.
4. The province is preparing to provide flu shots to Ontarians this fall so they can protect themselves and reduce the number of hospitalizations due to influenza.
  5. If you have questions about COVID-19 vaccines, please contact the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 (TTY for people who are deaf, hearing-impaired or speech-impaired: 1-866-797-0007), which is open seven days a week from 8 a.m. to 8 p.m. and capable of providing assistance in more than 300 languages.
  6. If you have questions about vaccinating your child, speak with your health care provider or contact the COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service at [sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult](https://sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult) or 1-888-304-6558 to book a confidential phone appointment with a SickKids' Registered Nurse or the Scarborough Health Network VaxFacts Clinic at [shn.ca/vaxfacts](https://shn.ca/vaxfacts) or 416-438-2911, ext. 5738 to speak with a qualified physician.
  7. For more information about treatment options, contact your primary care provider, visit a clinical assessment centre, or call Health Connect Ontario at 811 or 1-866-797-0007 (toll-free TTY) for more information on treatments, assistance, or eligibility for virtual care options.

## Additional Resources

1. [Ontario Introduces a Plan to Stay Open: Health System Stability and Recovery](#)
2. [COVID-19 Vaccine Bookings to Open for Children Aged Six Months to Under Five Years](#)
3. [Ontarians Aged 18+ Eligible for Second Booster Shot](#)
4. [COVID-19 vaccines for children and youth](#)
5. [Staying Up to Date with COVID-19 Vaccines: Recommended Doses](#)
6. Visit [COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service](#) to book a confidential phone appointment with a SickKids Registered Nurse
7. For resources in multiple languages to help local communication efforts in responding to COVID-19, visit Ontario's [COVID-19 communication resources webpage](#).
8. Visit Ontario's [website](#) to learn more about how the province continues to protect the people of Ontario from COVID-19.