

Eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine third doses and booster shots, new 8-week interval for second dose

Update to Primary Care Providers as of November 19, 2021

On November 6, 2021, the Province of Ontario expanded eligibility for booster doses and third doses of COVID-19 vaccine. In York Region, we are seeing many clients interested in receiving a booster dose, but some are unclear on the interval when they should receive their additional dose. Please review the current eligibility criteria below and share this information with your patients.

- A booster dose of COVID-19 vaccine is available at least **six months (168 days) after** receipt of the second dose for the following eligible groups:
 - Vulnerable older adults in congregate living settings
 - Individuals 70 years of age and older
 - Health Care Workers and Designated Essential Caregivers [as identified by the Ministry of Health](#)
 - First Nations, Inuit and Metis and non-indigenous household members age 16 and older
 - Those who received a complete series of viral vector vaccine (e.g., two doses of AstraZeneca vaccine or one dose of Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine)
- For moderately to severely-immunocompromised individuals, [as identified by the Ministry of Health](#), a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine is offered at an interval of **two months (56 days)**, with a minimum interval of 28 days, after the last dose of the initial primary series.

For additional details, see the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 Vaccine Third Dose Recommendations](#).

As of November 15, 2021, Ontario's Ministry of Health updated their guidance on [COVID-19 Vaccine Administration](#). As part of this update, the Ministry of Health is recommending an interval of **8 weeks between first and second doses of mRNA vaccines**.

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. An 8-week interval between dose 1 and 2 for the current mRNA vaccines appears to provide optimal protection while simultaneously minimizing risk of infection due to having protection from only one dose.

A second dose can still be received any time after the minimum interval of 21 days for Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) COVID-19 vaccine or 28 days for Moderna (Spikevax) COVID-19 vaccine.

For additional details, see the Ministry of Health's [COVID-19 Vaccine Administration](#).

COVID-19 vaccination appointments can be booked online at york.ca/covid19vaccine or by calling 1-877-464-9675

Contact York Region Public Health

Thank you for all your efforts to support our immunization program in York Region. For more information, call our dedicated health care professional line at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77280 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday) or visit york.ca/healthprofessionals. For the latest information on COVID-19 in York Region, please visit york.ca/COVID19

For questions regarding COVID-19 vaccine ordering please contact our Vaccine Inventory Program at COVID19vaccine@york.ca or 1-877-464-9675 ext. 50174

