

Walk-in First Dose COVID-19 Vaccination Appointments Now Available

Update to York Region health care providers as of July 14, 2021

The Regional Municipality of York continues to make excellent progress in the distribution and administration of COVID-19 vaccines and we are committed to ensuring everyone who wants a COVID-19 vaccine can get one.

It remains critically important for all York Region residents who have not received a first vaccine dose to get one.

Effective Monday, July 12, residents no longer need an appointment to receive a **first dose** of COVID-19 vaccine at most York Region COVID-19 vaccination clinics. At this time, walk-in appointments are available for **first dose vaccinations only**.

Please continue to promote and inform patients that COVID-19 vaccination clinics are available throughout York Region, including static clinics and pop-up sites.

Anyone who lives, works, or goes to school in York Region who is interested in receiving their **first dose** of COVID-19 vaccine can walk in and request a shot at the following clinics:

- Aaniin Community Centre in the City of Markham
- Cornell Community Centre in the City of Markham
- Maple Community Centre in the City of Vaughan
- Georgina Ice Palace in the Town of Georgina
- Ray Twinney Complex in the Town of Newmarket
- Richmond Green Centre in the City of Richmond Hill
- Soccer City Drive Thru in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (18+ only)
- Trisan Centre in the Township of King

At this time walk-ins are **not** being accepted at the drive-thru clinic at Emily Carr Secondary School in the City of Vaughan or select pop-up clinics.

Scheduled appointments will continue to be honoured at their booked times

First-dose walk-in appointments will not affect any booked appointment. Individuals can still book a scheduled appointment for a first or second dose of COVID-19 vaccine at york.ca/COVID19Vaccine. Individuals are encouraged to check back often as new appointments are opened regularly, and anyone who requires assistance booking an appointment may call Access York at 1-877-464-9675.

What to bring to a COVID-19 vaccination clinic

Please remind patients to bring the following to a clinic:

- Ontario Health Card (OHIP) if you have one
- Photo ID and any example that shows you live, work, or go to school in York Region



- A face mask or covering and wear a loose-fitting shirt that allows easy access to your upper arm

Additional information on how to prepare for a vaccination and videos of what to expect is available at york.ca/COVID19VaccineBeforeYouGo.

Important Information

- Walk-in appointments are available for **first dose vaccinations only**
- All York Region static clinic sites are accessible for those with physical ailments or disabilities
- Second dose appointments of the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine must be administered **at least 28 days after receipt of the first dose**
- Individuals must be 12 years of age or older on the date of their appointment
- Individuals 12 and 13 years of age require a parent or legal guardian to provide consent at the time of the vaccination. **If a parent or legal guardian is unable to accompany their child to the clinic they can complete and sign a [consent form](#) and send it with their child**
- Due to a current shortage in Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine supply, the **Moderna vaccine will be used for first and second dose appointments for individuals age 18+ at all York Region Public Health-run clinics through to at least Sunday, July 18, 2021**. Individuals age 12 to 17 remain exempt from this change and will be vaccinated with the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine as Health Canada has only authorized Pfizer-BioNTech for use in this age group
- York Region continues to remind residents that mixing of mRNA doses is safe and both the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna mRNA vaccines are over 90% effective at preventing serious illness and death due to COVID-19. The [National Advisory Committee on Immunization \(NACI\)](#) considers these mRNA vaccines to be interchangeable, if the same product is not readily available

Information for health care professionals

If you have questions about COVID-19 or COVID-19 vaccines, call the York Region Public Health phone line for health care professionals at 1-877-464-9675 ext. 77280 (8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday to Friday) or visit york.ca/healthprofessionals

Please encourage your patients to visit york.ca/COVID19Vaccine regularly for updated information.

Patient Frequently Asked Questions

Why should I get vaccinated?

COVID-19 infection can have serious consequences for all age groups, including young people, particularly given the circulation of new variants of concern. Everyone who is eligible to get a vaccine is encouraged to get one, but it is normal to have questions. This is an important health decision and we encourage you to talk to your health care professional about the benefits and risks of getting vaccinated.

Vaccinating all who are eligible, including youth, will help to reduce the number of cases of COVID-19 in our community and everyone to get back to the activities they enjoy. More information is available at york.ca/COVID19vaccineinfo

How do I book an appointment?

To book an appointment or for more information on clinic locations and appointment availability please visit york.ca/COVID19Vaccine. Most clinics offer vaccines by appointment only; do not visit a clinic site without scheduled appointment unless the clinic is currently offering walk-ins.

Please bring the following to your appointment:

- Ontario Health Card (OHIP) if you have one
- Photo ID and any example that shows you live in York Region
- A face mask or covering and wear a loose-fitting shirt that allows easy access to your upper arm

Additional information on how to prepare for your appointment and videos of what to expect at the clinic are available at york.ca/COVID19VaccineBeforeYouGo

Where are clinics located?

A full list of clinics is available at york.ca/COVID19Vaccine. Currently clinics are operating at the following locations:

- Aaniin Community Centre in the City of Markham
- Cornell Community Centre in the City of Markham
- Emily Carr Secondary School **Drive-Thru** in the City of Vaughan
- Georgina Ice Palace in the Town of Georgina
- Maple Community Centre in the City of Vaughan
- Ray Twinney Complex in the Town of Newmarket
- Richmond Green Centre in the City of Richmond Hill
- Soccer City **Drive-Thru** in the Town of Whitchurch-Stouffville (**18+ only**)
- Trisan Centre in the Township of King

Please continue to check [online](#) for up to date information and for information on pop-up clinics that may be scheduled in your community.

What if I need help with transportation to get to a clinic?

Local and rapid transit services are available in all nine York Region municipalities. To learn more and to plan your trip, visit yrt.ca or call 1-866-668-3978.

Residents 65+ who require transportation assistance for a vaccine appointment can call [YRT Mobility On-Request](#) directly at 1-866-744-1119 to arrange a ride. Interpretation services are available.

There are also other transportation services offered by community organizations such as ([CHATS](#), [Carefirst](#), [Routes](#), [Pinkcars.ca](#)) you may be eligible for. For a complete list of community transportation options, call 211 or visit 211central.ca

When travelling on public transportation, please practice public health safety measures such as hand washing/sanitizing and wearing a face covering.

What are the side-effects of the vaccine?

Side-effects after vaccination are often part of the body's natural response to a vaccine. Side-effects are usually mild and temporary, only lasting for a few hours or days. The clinical trial showed adolescents 12 to 15 years of age experienced similar side-effects as adults after both the first and second dose. Side-effects are usually not serious and do not last long.

Side-effects within 7 days after both dose 1 and dose 2 can include:

- pain at the injection site
- fatigue
- headache
- chills
- muscle pain
- fever
- joint pain
- injection site redness
- swollen lymph nodes
- nausea

York Region Public Health is closely monitoring reports of potential cases of myocarditis or pericarditis in individuals following a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine. Most cases occur in teens and young adult males after the second dose of vaccine. Monitor for signs and symptoms and seek medical attention immediately if you experience chest pain, trouble breathing or irregular heartbeat after vaccination.

Is the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine safe for my child?

All [vaccines for COVID-19](#) authorized for use in Canada have been evaluated by Health Canada, using rigorous standards. Health Canada will continue to monitor all vaccines to ensure they are safe and effective.

Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine is the first COVID-19 vaccine to [be authorized by Health Canada](#) for use in adolescents. The vaccine was initially authorized for use in people 16 years of age and older [on December 9, 2020](#). After completing a thorough and independent scientific review of the evidence, Health Canada has determined this vaccine is safe and effective at preventing COVID-19 when used in children between 12 and 15 years of age.

Do I need to be concerned about reports of myocarditis and pericarditis?

The [Public Health Agency of Canada](#) (PHAC), Health Canada and Public Health Ontario (PHO) are closely monitoring rare reports of potential myocarditis or pericarditis following a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine, including those among youth.

A small number of cases of myocarditis and/or pericarditis following immunization with mRNA COVID-19 vaccines have been reported in Canada and internationally. Internationally, cases have been reported more frequently in adolescents and younger adults under 30 years of age, more often in males than in females and more frequently after a second dose. Most cases have been mild, and individuals have recovered quickly.

The association of myocarditis and pericarditis with mRNA vaccination has not yet been confirmed and the possible mechanism for causing inflammation remains under investigation. NACI continues to strongly recommend a complete series with an mRNA vaccine should be offered to all eligible individuals, including those 12 years of age and older. mRNA COVID-19 vaccines provide very good protection against SARS-CoV-2 infection and symptomatic COVID-19 disease, including severe illness, hospitalization and death. The benefits of the COVID-19 immunization program continue to outweigh the relatively small risk for all people including adolescents.

As a precaution, NACI recommends individuals who experienced myocarditis and/or pericarditis after a first dose of an mRNA vaccine should wait to get their second dose until more information is available. To see the full update, please visit [NACI Recommendations on the use of COVID-19 Vaccines](#).

What are myocarditis and pericarditis and how are they treated?

Myocarditis and pericarditis involve inflammation of the heart muscle or the sack in which it sits in the chest, respectively, in response to an infection or some other trigger.

Symptoms can include:

- Shortness of breath
- Chest pain
- The feeling of a rapid or abnormal heart rhythm (fast, pounding or fluttering)

All suspected cases of post-vaccine myocarditis or pericarditis should be assessed by a physician for an in-person evaluation.

Treatment depends on the severity of the case. Mild cases may be treated with nonsteroidal anti-inflammatory drugs (NSAIDS), such as Ibuprofen/Advil for relief of symptoms.

Moderate to severe cases may require further treatments, as recommended by an attending physician.

The currently available data shows that potential myocarditis and pericarditis after vaccination is usually a mild disease that is self-resolving; however, **anyone developing symptoms of myocarditis or pericarditis should see their doctor.**

York Region Public Health closely monitors COVID-19 vaccine safety alongside federal and provincial public health agencies to ensure vaccines continue to be safe.

Is it safe to mix vaccines?

On June 1, 2021, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) [updated their recommendations](#) on the interchangeability of authorized COVID-19 vaccines, also referred to as “mixed vaccine schedules”.

[NACI recommends](#) if **readily available**, the same mRNA COVID-19 vaccine product should be offered for the second dose in a vaccine series started with an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. When the same mRNA COVID-19 vaccine product is not readily available, another mRNA COVID-19 vaccine product recommended for use in that age group can be considered interchangeable and should be offered to complete the vaccine series.

The [Government of Ontario](#) is following NACI’s recommendation. If you are 18+ and your first dose was Moderna or Pfizer, you should get the same vaccine for your second dose when you are eligible, and it has been at least 28 days after your first dose. You can switch between Moderna and Pfizer safely if the original vaccine you got is not readily available.

Can I request the type of vaccine I get?

Vaccine clinic staff will ensure clients are aware of which vaccine brand they will be receiving at their appointment; however, there will be no opportunity for clients to request or switch to a particular vaccine brand.

Vaccines offered at partner or ministry-led clinics may differ from those being offered at York Region Public Health-led clinics. Vaccine brands are listed on york.ca/covid19vaccine by clinic location.

Pfizer and Moderna mRNA vaccines are very similar and offer nearly identical protection against COVID-19; Pfizer and Moderna vaccines are over 90% effective at preventing serious illness and death due to COVID-19. If the vaccine you received for your first dose is not available at your second dose appointment, it is recommended you receive the mRNA that is available rather than delaying your second dose.

Can I still get COVID-19 after being vaccinated?

There is still a chance you can contract COVID-19 after being vaccinated and it is currently unknown if you can transmit the virus after being immunized. We do know it takes approximately two weeks after getting vaccinated to be protected. One vaccine dose is effective against getting seriously sick.

You are not considered fully vaccinated until you have had two doses. It is important to continue to follow public health measures such as physical distancing, wearing a mask, staying home if unwell and washing your hands frequently. Studies are ongoing to determine the long-term protection of COVID-19 vaccines.

Does my child have to be 12 to get their vaccine or can they be turning 12 this year?

Individuals must be age 12 at the time of vaccination. Eligibility for this group is not based on the year of birth due to manufacturer requirements from Pfizer-BioNTech.

What if I have allergies?

If you have experienced a less severe allergic reaction to a previous dose or a component of a COVID-19 vaccine you should talk to your health care provider before you receive a second dose.

If you have experienced a severe allergic reaction (anaphylaxis) to an ingredient of, or previous dose of, the a COVID-19 you will not be able to receive your vaccine at a York Region clinic and should not receive a second dose without consulting with your health care provider.

COVID-19 vaccines do not contain eggs, gelatin (pork), gluten, latex, preservatives, antibiotics or aluminum. **Detailed vaccine ingredient lists can be found at canada.ca/COVID19**

Is there anything that would prevent me getting a vaccine?

The vaccine is safe for most people, including those with a health condition such as diabetes or a weak immune system.

Delay vaccination if you have a fever or COVID-19 symptoms, are confirmed or suspected to have COVID-19, or have received a flu shot or other vaccine in the past 14 days.

A consultation with your health care provider **is recommended but not required** before receiving the vaccine if you:

- Have a weak immune system from an illness or therapy, or an autoimmune condition
- Are pregnant or breastfeeding

When should I get my second dose?

Anyone 12+ who lives, works or goes to school in York Region is eligible to book a second dose 28 days after the first dose.

It is important to receive your second dose as soon as you are able. The COVID-19 vaccine takes up to two weeks after your second dose to provide maximize protection against COVID-19 and potential variants of concern. Visit york.ca/COVID19Vaccine

Will proof of COVID-19 vaccines be mandatory to attend school in-person?

Provinces and territories are responsible for determining school vaccination policies, including the reporting of vaccination status. Some provinces and territories require mandatory reporting of vaccinations for school entry, to increase the ability of public health officials to respond during an outbreak. Currently, COVID-19 vaccination is not listed under mandatory reporting for school entry. Additional information on vaccines and schools in Ontario can be found on the Government of Ontario's [Vaccines for children at school](https://www.ontario.ca/page/vaccines-for-children-at-school) web page.

As more information becomes available it will be posted at york.ca/COVID19Vaccine and york.ca/SafeAtSchool. We encourage you to check york.ca/COVID19 regularly for reliable up-to date information.

Can I return to normal activities once I have my vaccine?

You must continue to follow all public health measures even after getting vaccinated:

- Practice physical distancing
- Wear a mask when required
- Wash your hands frequently
- Stay home if you are unwell

Public health measures remain the foundation of the pandemic response while vaccines continue to roll out across the country. It is important that everyone, regardless of vaccination status, continue to follow recommended public health measures.

Where can I get more information?

If you have questions or concerns about COVID-19 vaccinations, we encourage you to call the York Region Health Connection line at 1-800-361-5653 (TTY: 1-866-512-6228) and speak with a public health nurse. They can provide you with reliable, up to date information to help you make an informed decision.

Visit york.ca/COVID19Vaccine for more information, resources and to book your COVID-19 vaccine appointment.