

COVID-19 Vaccines: Eligibility, Shortened Dose Interval and Vaccine Preferences

Update to York Region health care providers as of April 15, 2021

York Region Public Health continues to move through the priority groups of the [Provincial vaccine distribution plan](#). The following eligible groups are able to book an appointment by visiting york.ca/COVID19Vaccine:

- York Region residents 65 years of age and older (born in 1956 or earlier)
- [Highest, Very High and High Priority Health Care Workers](#) who live OR work in York Region
- Highest and high risk health conditions and one essential caregiver. An **essential caregiver** is someone providing direct, frequent and sustained in-person personal care and/or assistance with activities of daily living to the individual and must book their appointment and come to the clinic at same time as the individual with the highest or high risk chronic condition
 - A list of conditions currently eligible in the highest and high risk priority groups is [available from the Province](#) and on york.ca/COVID19Vaccine. Individuals in the *at-risk* group are not eligible at this time.
- York Region residents between the ages of 45 and 59 (born between 1962 and 1976) and currently live at an address in one of the following a high priority postal code: L4L, L6A, L4K, L4J or L3S
- Education staff who provide direct in-person supports to students with complex special needs
- Staff, essential caregivers and any residents that have not yet received a first dose in long-term care homes, retirement homes and First Nations elder care homes
- Alternative level of care patients in hospitals who have a confirmed admission to a long-term care home, retirement home or other congregate care home for seniors
- Staff, residents and caregivers in other congregate care settings for seniors
- Indigenous adults and adult members of their households
- Adults with a chronic condition receiving home care services (appropriate documentation, such as a letter from Ontario Health Team/Central LHIN, is required)
- Faith leaders who live or work in York Region AND provide end of life care, care of the deceased, care of those who are unwell or provides pastoral services in vulnerable settings

Please do not instruct individuals who are not included in the eligible groups above to book an appointment at a York Region Public Health immunization clinic.

In addition, please do not instruct individuals to receive their second dose of COVID-19 vaccine earlier than the recommended interval of 16 weeks between doses ([with exceptions for transplant recipients and some cancer patients](#).)

At this time, we are not accepting letters from physicians to verify health conditions for eligibility or for altering the interval between doses.

Public Health cannot provide advice to patients on contraindications to the COVID-19 vaccine related to medications or medical conditions. These discussions and decisions should be made by the attending physician.

Vaccine Preferences

As health care providers, you are a trusted voice for York Region residents when it comes to COVID-19 vaccines. It is important to maintain vaccine confidence for your patients as more and more individuals become eligible.

Waiting for a specific type of vaccine is not recommended as it not only poses a risk to an individual, but further delays the mass immunization of the population. All four vaccines approved by Health Canada are safe and effective at preventing COVID-19 infection, serious illness, hospitalization and death. At this time, York Region Public Health is only administering the mRNA vaccines, Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech, as these are currently the vaccines in supply.

To ensure we can vaccinate everyone who wants to be vaccinated as safely and as quickly as possible, it is important that people who have access to the vaccine are vaccinated the first time it is offered to them. Vaccination is our best shot for allowing individuals, families and workers to safely resume normal life.

For individuals aged 55 and older, AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine is currently available at 37 pharmacies in York Region. Please encourage your eligible patients to [book a vaccine appointment at a participating pharmacy](#) through the Provincial booking site when available in the Region they reside in.

Questions? Contact York Region Public Health

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.