

## **All Ontarians Aged 5+ Eligible for Bivalent Booster**

### **December 16, 2022**

This document was prepared on December 16, 2022 by Natalie Garrison. Natalie works for North Yorkers for Disabled Persons as an Outreach Communication Facilitator, Information Referral and Resources Support. She can be reached at [natalie.nydp@gmail.com](mailto:natalie.nydp@gmail.com).

---

*Most of this information is from an update by the Government of Ontario.*

*Click [here](#) to read the original article.*

*Information from other sources will be followed by hyperlinks.*

Health Canada recently approved a bivalent COVID-19 booster for children between ages five and 11. This means that everyone in Ontario who is five years old and over is eligible for a bivalent COVID-19 booster.

The bivalent COVID-19 booster for children between ages five and 11 will not be available right away. Starting December 21, parents and caregivers can book appointments for their child/ren for this new booster.

### **How is a bivalent booster different from a regular booster?**

A COVID-19 bivalent booster targets the original COVID-19 virus and provides better protection against the other variants that are going around, especially the Omicron variant and its sub-variants. Click [here](#) to learn more about bivalent vaccines.

### **What about my children's other vaccines?**

Parents and caregivers should discuss vaccination with their health care provider to determine the best timing and approach for COVID-19 vaccination ([source](#)).

Flu shots can be safely given to children at the same time as the COVID-19 bivalent booster. It is also safe to get your flu shot at any time before or after a COVID-19 vaccine for individuals aged six months and older. Find out more at [ontario.ca/flu](https://ontario.ca/flu).

Parents are reminded to also stick to the Ontario routine immunization schedule (click [here](#)). If your child missed some vaccinations or if you are unsure about which vaccinations they have received, contact your health care provider or public health unit to get their vaccination schedule back on track. Click [here](#) to find your public health unit and learn how to contact them.

If you have questions about vaccinating your child/ren, you can book a confidential conversation with a registered nurse through the SickKids COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service at [www.sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult](https://www.sickkids.ca/vaccineconsult) or 1-888-304-6558. Appointments are available in multiple languages.

SickKids supports Ontarians who:

- Have specific questions or concerns related to the COVID-19 vaccine that you cannot find the answer to elsewhere.
- Have complex medical histories or medical conditions (i.e. chronic illness)
- Require additional support for their COVID-19 vaccine due to medical complexity, developmental disorder or mobility, communication, behavioural or other specialized needs, including significant fear of needles.

## **Where can I get more information about COVID-19 vaccines?**

For information about COVID-19 and children, click [here](#) for the SickKids Learning Hub.

You can book a phone appointment with the VaxFacts Clinic to speak with a trusted physician from the Scarborough Health Network at [www.shn.ca/vaxfacts](http://www.shn.ca/vaxfacts) or 416-438-2911 ext. 5738. This line is not just for people in Scarborough; it's for everyone in Canada ([source](#)). This service is available in over 200 languages ([source](#)). If you are Black and would like to speak to a Black doctor, just let them know, and they will connect you with one ([source](#)).

You can also speak to your family healthcare provider, such as your family doctor. If you don't have one, you can call the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 to speak to a health specialist (TTY: 1-866-797-0007). This line is available in more than 300 languages, seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

You can always contact your local public health unit. Click [here](#) to find your public health unit and learn how to contact them.

## **Where can I book an appointment for my child/ren's bivalent booster?**

Remember that you have to wait until December 21 to book appointments for your child/ren for this new booster. The following places are where you can book appointments in the future, but you won't see the option to book a bivalent booster for your child/ren until December 21.

Parents and caregivers can book appointments at a City-run or hospital vaccine clinic using the Province's registration system (click [here](#)) or by calling 1-833-943-3900 (TTY: 1-866-797-0007). This line is available in more than 300 languages, seven days a week from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m.

Pharmacies that are providing COVID-19 vaccines and boosters can be found by using the provincial webpage (click [here](#)).

Click [here](#) for the Province's "How to book a COVID-19 vaccine appointment" webpage, which has more information. Click [here](#) for details about Toronto COVID-19 vaccine clinics, including pop-up clinics and hospital clinics, as well as transportation to clinics in Toronto.

## Final Thoughts

To help keep everyone as healthy as possible this winter, you are strongly encouraged to stay home when you are feeling sick and wash your hands often. It is also strongly recommended that you wear face masks in indoor public settings and other places where you feel like you should be wearing one.

“As the weather gets colder and more people spend time with their loved ones indoors this holiday season, vaccination remains the most effective way we can protect ourselves from the most serious effects of COVID-19 and influenza,” said Sylvia Jones, Deputy Premier and Minister of Health.

“Vaccines provide strong protection against severe illness from COVID-19 and its variants and will help ease pressures on our hospitals and emergency departments.”

—

If you think you may be experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, take the self-assessment at [www.ontario.ca/coronavirus](http://www.ontario.ca/coronavirus). Follow all directions from your medical provider or your local health unit at the following phone numbers:

Health Connect Ontario: 811

Telehealth Ontario: 1-866-797-0000

Toronto Public Health: 416-338-7600

Peel Public Health: 905-799-7700

Durham Region Health Department: 905-668-7711

York Region Public Health: 1-877-464-9675