

Answering Your Questions

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Question: Should I get Pfizer for the booster shot if I had Pfizer for my first 2 shots?

According to the Government of Ontario, “Either Moderna or Pfizer vaccines may be used as a third or booster dose (regardless of which COVID-19 vaccine was used in the primary series).” Recommendations will be re-examined and updated on an ongoing basis as more evidence becomes available.

Source:

1. https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID-19_vaccine_third_dose_recommendations.pdf

Question: Can I get the booster shot sooner than 6 months after my second dose?

According to Canada’s National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), the minimum time between the second dose and the third dose is 28 days, but “an interval longer than the minimum 28 days between doses is likely to result in a better immune response.”

Also, they say that “there is evidence that longer intervals between doses in the primary series of COVID-19 vaccines result in higher antibody responses and also higher efficacy/effectiveness.” This means that for most people, getting the vaccine six months or later will increase their immune systems’ ability to fight off the virus.

However, “delaying the booster dose will increase the period during which individuals who may have reduced protection against SARS-CoV-2 infection are vulnerable to infection, although protection against severe outcomes will likely be more durable after the primary series.” In other words, while you wait for your booster shot, you will be vulnerable to getting infected with COVID-19, but the disease will likely be less severe than if you weren’t vaccinated at all.

If you are a resident of a Long-Term Care facility and everyone is receiving their booster dose, you may receive your booster dose sooner than 6 months “due to operational considerations when boosting entire facilities.”

The Government of Ontario recommends talking with your healthcare provider to choose an ideal time to get your booster shot. This can optimize your body’s immune response to the vaccine and minimize delays in managing any underlying health conditions.

Sources:

1. <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci/statement-september-28-2021-booster-dose-long-term-care-residents-seniors-living-other-congregate-settings.html>
2. https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/coronavirus/docs/vaccine/COVID-19_vaccine_third_dose_recommendations.pdf

Question: Can the Omni variant come through vents in schools?

The World Health Organization recently stated that “it is not yet clear whether Omicron is more transmissible (e.g., more easily spread from person to person) compared to other variants.”

For COVID-19 in general, in both Canada and the United States, so far there is no evidence that it has spread through an air vent or other type of HVAC system. I mention the United States because it has a significantly larger population than Canada. I hope it is reassuring to see that, even among a greater number of people, there aren't any proven cases of someone getting COVID-19 from an infected person who was in a different room as them. This situation is still being monitored just in case it is possible.

Earlier this year, Toronto Public Health announced: “At this time there is no evidence that the COVID-19 virus can transmit through the air over long distances or through air ducts.” Also, the United States' Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (also known as the CDC) recently shared that “there is no definitive evidence to date that viable virus has been transmitted through an HVAC system to result in disease transmission to people in other spaces served by the same system.”

I hope this information has reduced your concern! According to Toronto Public Health, “while aerosols may contribute to the spread of COVID-19, most infections are still linked to close contact with infected individuals.”

Sources:

1. <https://www.who.int/news/item/28-11-2021-update-on-omicron>
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/community/ventilation.html#Ventilation-FAQs>
3. <https://www.toronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/8de9-COVID19-Transmission-Aerosols-Ventilation.pdf>

Question: Are we going remote in school again?

So far, there haven't been any announcements about that! For COVID-19 updates for Ontario schools, check out [this website](#).

Source:

1. <https://www.ontarioschools.org/UpdatesPage.aspx>

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

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