

## **Fall Booster Dose Rollout: Recommendations from Vaccine Experts (NACI) July 8, 2022**

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Most of this information is from a recent update published last week by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI). This article is a general overview, so some parts of the original are not included.

If you have questions, you can click [here](#) to see if they are in the original document. You can also click [here](#) to read the document's official summary.

### **What is NACI and why should we care about its recommendations?**

NACI is a non-partisan advisory committee that is made up of medical experts in infectious diseases, immunology, pharmacy, nursing, epidemiology, pharmacoeconomics, and pediatrics.\* NACI also has public health and social science experts as members to ensure that their recommendations are equitable for members of various social groups.\*,\*

The following NACI recommendations have been approved by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and made available to healthcare providers and provincial and territorial governments across Canada.\*

However, these guidelines are not guaranteed to be implemented in the fall. These governments have the power to choose whether or not they will follow recommendations offered by NACI. For instance, the government of Ontario may not follow these guidelines because they are not mandatory.

Regardless, these guidelines are still important to review as they are based on the best current scientific knowledge that is available. As consumers, it's wise to consider this information when making decisions about whether we will get another booster dose once it becomes available to us.

### **According to NACI, who should be a priority to get a booster dose in the fall?**

NACI strongly recommends that people who are at an increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should be offered a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose in the fall no matter how many booster doses that they have already received.

This includes:

- adults in racialized communities, adults with disabilities, and adults in other marginalized communities
- adults in or from First Nations, Métis, or Inuit communities
- adults who are at least 65 years old and older
- individuals who are at least 12 years old and older AND who have an underlying medical condition that places them at high risk of severe COVID-19
- people who are at least 12 years old and older AND who are living in Long-Term Care facilities or congregate living settings (e.g., quarters for migrant workers, shelters, correctional facilities, group homes)

NACI also recommends that a COVID-19 booster dose is offered to all other people between the ages of 12 and 64 years of age.

### **According to NACI, what is the best timeframe to get another booster dose?**

It is ideal to get another booster dose 6 months after your last COVID-19 vaccine dose or 6 months after the last time you tested positive for COVID-19.

A shorter time period of at least 3 months may be allowed to people who are at greater risk (the groups listed above). A shorter timeline of at least 3 months can also be offered if that would help with efficient vaccine roll outs based on any operational issues.

### **Has NACI made any recommendations about who should get the new vaccines that are being developed for Omicron specifically?**

Not yet! NACI only makes recommendations about vaccines that Health Canada has already approved for use in Canada.

On June 30, Moderna submitted an application to Health Canada for approval of its new COVID-19 vaccine that is designed to protect against both the original strain and Omicron variant of the virus.\* Pfizer has not submitted an application yet, but they are planning on doing so.\*

NACI will provide recommendations on the type of COVID-19 vaccines that should be used as booster doses once evidence on these new vaccines becomes available.\*

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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:

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