

New Vaccine Available for Children who are Older than 6 Months and Younger than 5 Years

July 22, 2022

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Health Canada recently approved Moderna's paediatric vaccine that is safe and effective for infants and children below the age of five.* Over the next few days, Moderna's paediatric vaccine is being distributed across the province.*

Health Canada previously approved the Pfizer vaccine for children ages five and up and the Moderna vaccine for children ages six and up.*

As of yesterday, parents and caregivers of children who are between the ages of six months to under five years are able to book appointments for this version of the COVID-19 vaccine.*

Also as of yesterday, immunocompromised youth between the ages of 12 to 17 are eligible to schedule their second booster dose (fifth dose) if at least six months have passed since their first booster (fourth dose).*

What are the differences between this paediatric Moderna COVID-19 vaccine different & the vaccine for children between the ages of six to 11?

All COVID-19 vaccines for children are much lower than the adult dose.* There are differences between the vaccine for children younger than five years old and the vaccine for children between six and 11 years of age.

The vaccine for children below the age of five has half the amount of vaccine given to children between six and 11 years of age.*

This vaccine still requires two doses for the child to be fully vaccinated.* The recommended waiting period in between first and second doses is eight weeks.*

My child is immunocompromised. Do they need a booster?

It depends on their age! A booster dose is not currently recommended for immunocompromised people who are younger than 12 years old.*

I'm not sure if my child would be considered immunocompromised. What are the requirements?

Children between the ages of five to 11 may be considered immunocompromised if they are:

- a transplant recipient (including solid organ transplant and hematopoietic stem cell transplants)
- receiving stable, active treatment (chemotherapy, targeted therapies, immunotherapy) for a malignant hematologic disorder or solid tumor
- in receipt of chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-T-cell
- an individual with moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (for example, DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Stage 3 or advanced untreated HIV infection and those with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome
- undergoing active treatment with the following categories of immunosuppressive therapies: anti-B cell therapies (monoclonal antibodies targeting CD19, CD20 and CD22), high-dose systemic corticosteroids, alkylating agents, antimetabolites, or tumor-necrosis factor (TNF) inhibitors and other biologic agents that are significantly immunosuppressive or are taking specific immunosuppressant medications (PDF)
- receiving dialysis (hemodialysis or peritoneal dialysis).*

I'm not sure if I should vaccinate my child. What should I do?

That's okay! Nobody can vaccinate a child without the consent of their parents or caregivers. Parents will have to provide consent on behalf of the child before or at the time of the appointment.

There are a few ways that you can speak with a healthcare professional about the vaccine, your child's health conditions, and more!

1. You can speak to your family healthcare provider, such as your family doctor.*
2. 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.*
3. Another option is to visit [COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service](#) to book a confidential phone appointment with a SickKids Registered Nurse.*

Deputy Premier and Minister of Health Sylvia Jones stated: "Getting vaccinated remains the best defence against COVID-19 and I encourage parents with questions to reach out to their health care provider, the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre or the SickKids COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service to make an informed choice for their family."*

Chief Medical Officer Dr. Kieran Moore explained: "Although most children who get infected have no symptoms or mild symptoms, some can become very sick and require hospitalization. The vaccine offered to children aged six months to under five years is a lower dose that is safe and effective at protecting this age group from COVID-19.

"Even if a child has already had COVID-19, vaccination will help to further improve the immune response and provide more robust protection. I encourage every parent and caregiver to consider getting their younger children vaccinated and protected, especially if they are immunocompromised or have other serious medical conditions."*

How do I book an appointment?

Currently, these vaccines are only available through public health unit clinics, as well as participating paediatricians, primary care providers and pharmacies.*

Starting July 28, appointments will be available through the [COVID-19 vaccination portal](#) and the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre, directly through participating primary care providers and paediatricians, as well as at [participating pharmacies](#) and Indigenous-led vaccination clinics.* You can also book an appointment through your public health unit using its own booking system.* Click [here](#) to find your public health unit and learn how to contact them.

Please note that children must already be at least six months old to receive a vaccine.*

Toronto Public Health Survey

Toronto Public Health is running a survey to better understand parents' thoughts on COVID-19 vaccines for children who are between the ages of 6 months and 4 years. They are looking for parents and guardians of children under the age of 5 years old to complete this survey.

Results from the survey will help to inform how and where vaccines should be made available to children of these ages in Toronto. All responses are anonymous. No personal health information will be collected.

The survey is available in multiple languages: Arabic, Bengali, Chinese-Simplified, Chinese-Traditional, Dari, English, Farsi, French, Portuguese, Russian, Spanish, Urdu and Vietnamese.

The survey will only take 5 minutes and can be completed online through the following link: <https://survey.confirmit.ca/wix/p221525001788.aspx>.

For more information, please email TPHFeedback@toronto.ca. If you have any questions, you can call them at (416) 338-7600.

Final Thoughts

If you have any more questions about the safety of vaccines in children and youth, click [here](#) to read information from Ontario's Ministry of Health and/or click [here](#) to read information from the federal government.

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