November 22, 2021

**Public Health Update – COVID-19 vaccine for children 5-11 and booster dose for adults**

**Summary**

Children between 5 to 11 years can now get the COVID-19 vaccine. Parents can register their children on the [Get Vaccinated system](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register).

Public Health Officials announced that the next step in BC’s COVID-19 immunization plan is to offer booster doses for all eligible persons.

**Details:**

**COVID-19 vaccines for Children 5 – 11 years old**

Any child between 5 and 11 years old can receive a COVID-19 vaccine. They will be available soon.

If your child is 4 years old, you will only be able to get them vaccinated after their fifth birthday.

The vaccines are free and your children do not need BC Care Cards to receive them.

Parents can register their children in the [Get Vaccinated system](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/covid-19/vaccine/register) to be notified of when your child can get vaccinated.

**Preparing your child for vaccine appointment**

You can tell your child about the vaccine one day before the actual day of the vaccine.

You can encourage your child to ask any questions they may have about the vaccine. It is important that they understand what will happen at the appointment and feel comfortable.

If you have already had your COVID-19 vaccine, you can share your own experience with them.

* They may feel a pinch or a poke with the needle, but it will be very quick.
* Their arm may feel heavy or sore for a few hours, but the feeling will go away.

You can also use the “CARD” system: comfort, ask, relax distract to help your child their preferred way to prepare for the vaccine.

**Vaccine Booster Dose for Adults**

From September to December 2021, invitations for booster dose will be sent to in the order of:

* Clinically extremely vulnerable (immunosuppressed)
* Rural and remote Indigenous communities
* Residents in long-term care and assisted living
* Seniors aged 70+ and Indigenous people aged 12+
* Long-term home support clients and seniors in independent living
* Healthcare workers with short interval of dose 1 and 2

Estimated January to May 2022, more people will be invited to get their booster shot in this order:

* Clinically extremely vulnerable (non-immunosuppressed)
* Healthcare workers in acute care and long-term care, assisted living
* Healthcare workers in communities
* All remaining eligible people aged 12+, with second shot between 6 to 8 months prior

Currently, the plan is for people to schedule their booster appointment in health authority clinics or participating pharmacies. The call centre will continue to support those who can’t book online. Walk-ins are not available for booster shots.

**Facts**

* More than 90,000 booster doses have been administered in BC.
* All booster doses will be mRNA vaccines. Those who received AstraZeneca for the first or second dose will receive Moderna or Pfizer for the booster.
* Health authorities and pharmacies will continue to focus on flu clinics through the fall, in addition to delivering COVID-19 vaccines and boosters.
* More than 90% of British Columbians are registered in BC’s Get Vaccinated System.

COVID-19 vaccines are highly effective. However, over time, there is a gradual decline in protection. We are encouraged to take the booster dose to reinforce our protection. Let’s continue to keep ourselves and each other safe from this virus and its variants.