

November 2, 2021

COVID-19 Vaccine RE: Important Program Updates

1. Pediatric COVID-19 Immunization Program (for children aged 5 to 11 years)
2. Booster/third dose recommendations
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4. mRNA COVID-19 vaccine primary series recommended interval

1. Pediatric COVID-19 Immunization Program (for children aged 5 to 11 years)

- **Approval:** the Pfizer COVID-19 pediatric vaccine for those aged 5 to 11 years is currently under review by Health Canada with approval anticipated in the coming weeks. Once Health Canada authorizes the Pfizer pediatric vaccine for use in Canada, it is expected that the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) will release a statement with its recommendations for use that will be considered for Manitoba's Pediatric COVID-19 Immunization Program roll out.
- **Supply:** it is expected that there will be sufficient supply available to complete first dose demand. The Pfizer pediatric vaccine will be a different strength and formulation and as such, the current adult formulation of the Pfizer vaccine for use in 12 years of age and older is **NOT** to be used for those aged 5 to 11 years. Once the pediatric vaccine is authorized for use in Canada, more details on the product, dosing, dilution requirements, storage and handling will be communicated and included in Manitoba's Clinical Practice Guidelines.
- **Access:** it is anticipated that the pediatric vaccine will be accessible in a wide variety of venues/providers, including regional clinics, school-based clinics, medical clinics and pharmacies. **To begin preparing for the approval and arrival of the Pfizer pediatric COVID-19 vaccine for 5 to 11 year olds, Manitoba is starting to plan for the allocation of the vaccine to those who have registered with Manitoba Health and Seniors Care to administer COVID-19 vaccines.**
 - If not yet registered and want to participate in the administration of COVID-19 vaccines, go to <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/partners/index.html> to register.
 - If registered, Manitoba is accepting requests for Pfizer pediatric vaccine in a NEW survey, available at: <https://mbgov.surveymonkey.ca/r/PX2CS9T>. Once product is approved and available, these requests will be reviewed and filled, taking into consideration the following:
 1. Clinics and pharmacies will be asked to request enough vaccine for 2 to 3 weeks at a time.
 2. The survey will remain open until vaccine delivery to Manitoba is confirmed (i.e. no firm deadline to respond).

3. Once pediatric vaccine is delivered to Manitoba, the initial survey will be closed and new pediatric vaccine requests will be included in the regular weekly survey.

Details on the timing and roll out of Manitoba's Pediatric COVID-19 Immunization Program will be made available when finalized.

2. Booster/third dose recommendations

- Emerging evidence suggests that immunity to a complete primary series of COVID-19 vaccination wanes over time, at least with respect to symptomatic infection, however effectiveness for healthy individuals remains high against severe outcomes (e.g., hospitalization and death).
- **Elderly persons and First Nation, Métis and Inuit adults regardless of residence may be at increased risk of more rapidly waning immunity and are therefore recommended to receive a third/booster dose of mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.**
- Manitoba recommends third/booster doses of COVID-19 mRNA vaccine for:
 - individuals aged 70 years and older (6 month interval); **effective November 3, 2021**
 - First Nation, Métis and Inuit adults regardless of residence (6 month interval); **effective November 3, 2021**
 - individuals who have only received a viral vector vaccine (6 month interval);
 - health care personnel who have direct contact with patients, residents or clients (6 month interval);
 - people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised due to a medical condition and/or treatment (≥ 28 day interval);
 - individuals who have only received one or two doses of a vaccine that is not approved by Health Canada (≥ 28 day interval); and,
 - residents of all personal care homes and congregate elderly person housing sites (6 month interval).
- People who are travelling to destinations with specific vaccination requirements may continue to be given a third dose (or provided a prescription for administration at a pharmacy or regional clinic) following a discussion of the risks and benefits of vaccination, and respecting the minimum interval of 28 days.
- Either mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) can be provided for third/booster doses but whenever possible, the same mRNA vaccine should be used as was used for dose two (if the last dose was a viral vector vaccine, use either Pfizer or Moderna for the the third/booster dose).

3. Moderna dosing update for third/booster doses

Where Moderna is provided for the third/booster dose, Manitoba is adopting the following NACI recommendation as it pertains to dosage:

- For adults aged ≤ 69 years who are living in community: **use a half dose (50 mcg; 0.25ml)** of Moderna for third/booster doses.

- For adults aged ≥ 70 years who are living in community: **use a full dose (100 mcg; 0.5ml)** of Moderna for third/booster doses.
- For adults of any age who are living in a personal care home or congregate elderly persons housing site: **use a full dose (100 mcg; 0.5ml)** of Moderna for third/booster doses.

NOTE: there is no change to the Pfizer third/booster dosage and, the full Moderna dosage (100 mcg; 0.5ml) is to be used for the primary series (dose 1 and dose 2).

4. mRNA COVID-19 vaccine primary series recommended interval

- Emerging data shows that extending the interval by several weeks leads to higher immune responses and greater protection after the second dose. **The recommended interval between dose 1 and dose 2 for both Pfizer and Moderna is eight (8) weeks.**
- The minimum interval of 28 days between dose 1 and dose 2 for the mRNA vaccines remains unchanged (with the exception of two Pfizer doses which can be given 21 days apart).
- Clinicians should continue to discuss the risks and benefits of earlier versus later vaccination and use their discretion in determining the optimal interval on a case-by-case basis, considering community SARS-CoV-2 transmission, the degree of individual risk of exposure to the virus and individual need for earlier protection (e.g., travel requirements).

The Clinical Practice Guidelines will be updated to reflect these changes and posted at <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/healthcare-professionals.html>.

Please share this information with all relevant colleagues in your facility/clinic.

Sincerely,

“Original signed by”

Joss Reimer, MD FRCPC MPH
Medical Lead, Vaccine Implementation Task Force