

Ontario Region Update

Information on COVID-19:
Canada.ca/coronavirus

Information for Indigenous communities on
COVID-19: www.sac-isc.gc.ca



INDIGENOUS SERVICES CANADA – October 6, 2022

Canada's first bivalent COVID-19 Booster

On September 12, 2022, Ontario [announced provincial eligibility](#) for the Moderna Spikevax Bivalent COVID-19 vaccine booster based on [guidelines from Health Canada and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#) (NACI). This is the first bivalent COVID-19 vaccine authorized in Canada for adults, protecting against both the original COVID-19 strain and the first Omicron variant. Populations who are more vulnerable to COVID-19 are encouraged to book vaccinations in Ontario. This includes First Nation, Inuit and Métis individuals (FN/I/M), and their non-Indigenous household members aged 18 and over. It also includes residents of Elder Care Lodges, individuals living in other congregate settings, and pregnant and breastfeeding individuals.

Eligible individuals are recommended to receive their bivalent booster dose 6 months after their last dose (regardless of how many boosters they have already received) **or** 3 months after they have experienced a known COVID-19 infection, whichever happens later. FN/I/M can get their COVID-19 vaccines through an Indigenous-led vaccination clinic. A list of these clinics can be found on Ontario's [COVID-19 Vaccines page](#), under **Indigenous-led clinics**. Vaccines can also be booked directly through pharmacies or the [Ontario Vaccine Portal](#). If any community members have issues accessing a vaccine, they can speak with their local provider, health authority and/or nursing station.

NACI recommends getting whichever COVID-19 vaccination is available for booster doses. It is important to remain up to date on vaccinations with whichever COVID-19 vaccine is available. To read NACI's full statement, please visit the [Recommendations on the use of bivalent Omicron-containing mRNA COVID-19 vaccines](#).

Ontario FN/I/M COVID-19 Cases

*As of September 23, 2022 at 8:30 A.M. EST

- **25,644** cases confirmed in-community
- **168** active cases on reserve
- **68** deaths | 370 hospitalizations
- **25,408** resolved cases (99%)

COVID-19 vaccine guidance for pregnant/breastfeeding individuals

On September 9, 2022, the Public Health Agency of Canada released updated [guidance from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization](#) (NACI) about getting vaccinated against COVID-19 during pregnancy and breastfeeding. NACI continues to strongly recommend that adults who are pregnant or breastfeeding receive a primary series of an authorized mRNA COVID-19 vaccine.

In summary, NACI advises the following:

- **People who are pregnant or breastfeeding** may receive all doses for which they are eligible over the course of their pregnancy and/or breastfeeding period.
- **People who are pregnant or breastfeeding** can receive a COVID-19 vaccine booster dose, **including the new bivalent booster**, regardless of the number of previously received booster doses.

For more personalized information about their health and immunization, people who are pregnant or breastfeeding can talk to their local health provider(s). To read more from NACI's statement, including supporting evidence and rationale for this guidance, please see [NACI Statement: Updated guidance on COVID-19 vaccines for individuals who are pregnant or breastfeeding](#).

Ontario COVID-19 Vaccines

*As of [September 25, 2022](#)

- **80.5%** completed a primary series
- **49.8%** received a primary series and 1 booster dose
- **14.9%** received a primary series and 2 booster doses

For the most up-to-date national information on COVID-19, visit the [Indigenous Services Canada](#) website or the Government of Canada's Twitter and Facebook pages at [@GCIIndigenous](#) and [@GCIIndigenousHealth](#).

Other Updates

Routine immunizations aren't just for COVID-19

Many children across Ontario are back to school and in close physical contact with others. While it is important to stay up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccines, it is equally important to maintain regular immunization schedules for other communicable illnesses and vaccine-preventable diseases.

For example, children in grade 7 are eligible to be vaccinated against Hepatitis B, Human papillomavirus (HPV) and meningococcal disease. By immunizing vaccine-preventable disease now, children are protected before they are potentially exposed. Plus, without these vaccinations, these types of infections can lead to more severe health issues later in life including cancer, liver disease and meningitis. There are multiple avenues to help families ensure their kids are up-to-date on their vaccines. Childhood vaccines can be accessed through healthcare providers and nursing stations; catch-up clinics through local health units; and in some locations, through school-based immunization programs, where students can receive vaccinations at school.

For more information about school-age vaccinations in Ontario, and to keep track of upcoming pediatric vaccinations, please visit Ontario.ca/vaccines-children-school. Local health authorities and nursing stations are also a great resource for routine vaccinations.

Canada removes COVID-19 border and travel measures

On October 1, 2022, Canada removed all COVID-19 entry restrictions for international travel into Canada. This includes testing, quarantine and isolation requirements for anyone entering Canada. All travelers, regardless of citizenship, are no longer required to:

- submit public health information through the ArriveCAN app or website
- provide proof of vaccination
- undergo pre- or on-arrival testing
- carry out COVID-19-related quarantine or isolation
- monitor and report if they develop signs or symptoms of COVID-19 upon arriving to Canada

However, individuals are still strongly discouraged from travelling if they have symptoms of COVID-19. For more information, please read the [full news release](#).

Commemorating the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation

As part of its responsibilities to the [National Day of Truth and Reconciliation](#), Canada approved funding to 278 community projects across the provinces, as well as two major national projects during Truth and Reconciliation Week.

From September 26 to September 29, 2022, the National Centre for Truth and Reconciliation (NCTR) offered a national educational program to all students from grades 1 to 12 (secondary 5) in Canada. On September 30, APTN collaborated with the NCTR to broadcast *Remembering the Children*. Live from Ottawa, *Remembering the Children* was a collection of speakers, Elders, musicians, and artists who came together to honour Survivors, their families and communities. The event also commemorated both the National Day of Truth and Reconciliation and the Indigenous-led grassroots commemorative day, [Orange Shirt Day](#).

If you missed the broadcast or would like to share it with community members, it can be found on [APTN's YouTube channel](#). For more information, including funding recipients for the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, please visit the [full news release](#) online.

Government of Canada launches pilot initiative to further support Indigenous master's students

On September 1, 2022, the Minister of Innovation, Science and Industry announced the launch of the [Indigenous Scholars Awards and Supplements Pilot Initiative](#). The new initiative provides financial support to Indigenous graduate students in social science, humanities, natural science, and engineering programs.

[Qualifying Indigenous applicants](#) will receive a \$17,500 award, as well as a \$5,000 supplement as part of the current Canada Graduate Scholarships—Master's program offered by the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council (SSHRC) and the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council (NSERC).

The deadline to apply is December 1, 2022. Results will be announced in April 2023. For more information, please visit the full news release and [Indigenous Scholars Awards and Supplements Pilot Initiative](#).

Help is available whenever you need it.

Immediate support is available 24/7 for all Indigenous people in Canada.

Hope for Wellness Help Line and Chat
1-855-242-3310 or www.hopeforwellness.ca

Indian Residential Schools Crisis Line
1-866-925-4419

Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls Support Line
1-844-413-6649



Please feel free to contact the FNIHB Ontario COVID-19 generic inbox: sac.covid-19fnihbontario.isc@canada.ca if you or your community members have any information needs.