



Media Release

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Ontario expands eligibility for fourth doses of COVID-19 vaccines

In response to the Ontario government's announcement that it is expanding eligibility for fourth doses of the COVID-19 vaccine, the Grey Bruce Health Unit is collaborating with its partners to ensure everyone who wants the vaccine can get it as soon as possible.

As of Thursday, individuals aged 60 and over as well as First Nation, Inuit and Métis individuals and their non-Indigenous household members aged 18 and over can receive a fourth dose.

The Ministry of Health is recommending an interval of five months between the third and fourth dose. As a result, the number of Grey-Bruce residents who are eligible for a fourth dose on any given day will fluctuate based on when their last vaccine was administered.

National Advisory Committee for Immunization (NACI) recommends a six-month interval between the first and second booster doses and suggested a three-month interval between infection and COVID-19 booster dose (i.e. three months after symptom onset or positive test if asymptomatic) or six months from the most recent vaccine dose, whichever is longer.

The Grey Bruce Health Unit is now analyzing data on local demand and eligibility for fourth doses and collaborating with the Ministry of Health, local pharmacies and primary care providers to map out where the vaccination capacity is available.

If needed, the Grey Bruce Health Unit is ready and willing to open up clinics to provide vaccines.

"The Grey Bruce Health Unit will also be supporting First Nation, Inuit and Métis communities as well as individuals in high-risk sectors, such as long-term care homes, retirement homes and other congregate care settings, to roll out the availability of fourth-dose boosters," says Grey-Bruce Medical Officer of Health Dr. Ian Arra.

"We all need to remember that the pandemic is not over and COVID-19 activity is increasing across the province. Getting a booster dose, if you are eligible, is very

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important as it remains the best defence against severe illness and death. This is especially the case for individuals who are considered high risk.”

Fourth doses are already available to residents of congregate care settings, including long-term care and retirement homes, as well as those who are immunocompromised.

Immunocompromised individuals are strongly encouraged to speak with their treating health care provider regarding the timing of vaccination in relation to therapy for their underlying health condition and/or treatment modification in view of possible decreased vaccine effectiveness with the use of immunosuppressive therapy.

Expanding booster eligibility will provide an extra layer of protection against the Omicron and BA.2 variants of COVID-19. All eligible Ontarians are encouraged to get their fourth dose as soon as possible.

Appointments for fourth dose boosters can be booked through the [COVID-19 vaccination portal](#), by calling the Provincial Vaccine Contact Centre at 1-833-943-3900 or through Indigenous-led vaccination clinics, participating pharmacies and participating primary care settings.

Everyone with COVID-19 symptoms should stay home.

Public health also strongly recommends that individuals continue to keep a two-metre distance from people outside of their households and wear a mask in crowded public indoor settings. Other protective measures include maintaining good ventilation in indoor spaces and cleaning hands regularly.

A COVID-19 self-assessment tool – for individuals who were exposed to COVID-19, have symptoms or for screening – is available [here](#).

For More Information:

To connect with the medical officer of health or the program manager, please contact:
Denis Langlois, Communications Co-ordinator,
Grey Bruce Health Unit,
519-376-9420 or 1-800-263-3456 ext. 1315,
Communications@publichealthgreybruce.on.ca