FAQ
COVID-19 fall 2022 booster

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Are you seeking answers about the fall booster for COVID-19 or the new bivalent vaccine? Here we address some common questions. If your question(s) is/are not answered here, email vislandhealth.info@islandhealth.ca and we'll do our best to get you the information you need.

What's new in Fall 2022?

New bivalent vaccine

The new bivalent COVID-19 vaccine is an adapted version of the Moderna Spikevax COVID-19 vaccine and targets the original COVID-19 virus and provides enhanced protection against Omicron. This new vaccine will be available as a booster to all adults over the age of 18 years, and youth from 12-17 years who are at higher risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19. You can request an alternative vaccine when you book your appointment.

Co-administration with flu and COVID-19 vaccines

This year, you can book the COVID-19 booster and flu vaccines together during the same appointment. Appointments will be available in many pharmacies and public health clinics. When you book an appointment in Get Vaccinated, the system will match you to your preferred location based on age and chosen vaccine.

Who is recommended to get the fall booster?

Everyone in BC over six months of age is eligible to be vaccinated to reduce the risk of COVID-19. Getting a fall booster can help prolong immune response and extend protection against severe illness as we enter into respiratory season during colder months.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) strongly recommends that individuals age 12 years and above who are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 receive a fall booster. Booster doses can help increase protection against both infection and severe disease, which is especially important for people who are at high risk of severe outcomes. Find out who is at higher risk according to NACI.

What if I already had COVID?

If you have already had COVID-19, you can still receive the booster since the combination of infection and vaccination provides the strongest protection (i.e. "hybrid immunity"). It is recommended that you wait three to six months after infection before getting your booster dose.

How do I book an appointment?

Booking an appointment to get vaccinated is easy and convenient. Register to book your appointment in the Get Vaccinated system or by calling 1-833-838-2323 (toll-free). Please make sure that your contact information is updated in the system. Once you are eligible for a COVID-19 booster dose, you will receive a notification through the province's online system via email or text message.

Should children get the COVID-19 vaccine?

COVID-19 vaccines are safe and effective for children. The vaccine has been rigorously tested and is specifically designed with a lower dose for children. Millions of children around the world have been safely immunized against COVID-19. While children are at lower risk of severe illness from COVID-19, it can still result in serious health concerns, including hospitalization and long-term symptoms.

Children age 5-11 years who received their primary COVID-19 vaccine series are eligible for a booster dose six months after their second dose of the primary series. Children age 5-11 years will receive the regular COVID-19 vaccine, not the bivalent. Youth aged 12-17 will receive the regular COVID-19 vaccine unless they are at an increased risk and with specified conditions.

Information about the COVID vaccine for children can be found on Health Canada's website.

Is the COVID-19 vaccine available for children under the age of five?

In July 2022, Health Canada approved the Moderna Spikevax mRNA COVID-19 vaccine formulated for children between the ages of 6 months and 5 years old. The two-dose series is now available for this age group across B.C. Parents must register their children in the Get Vaccinated system. Once registration is complete, parents will be invited to book a vaccine appointment at their local community clinic. Vaccines for children under the age of 12 are not available in pharmacies.

Getting vaccinated helps reduce the risk of getting and spreading COVID-19, allowing you and your children to do more, while keeping yourselves and your loved ones safe. Vaccinations are one of the ways that help keep us safe and put the pandemic behind us.