

COVID-19 Vaccine Bulletin

Thursday, April 8, 2021

All COVID-19 vaccines approved for use in Canada have been through [Health Canada's rigorous approval process](#) which has determined that there are no major safety concerns and that vaccines are [safe and effective](#). As with all medications and vaccines approved for use in Canada, there is [ongoing safety monitoring](#) of COVID-19 vaccines.

Common side effects for COVID-19 vaccines are similar to other vaccines and include things like pain at the injection site, fatigue, headache, muscle pain, chills and feeling feverish. These side effects are considered normal after any vaccine and are expected because of our body's immune response. Adverse reactions (e.g., allergic reaction or anaphylaxis) are extremely rare.

Many individuals have already received the COVID-19 vaccine. As of April 8, 2021, 2,834,784 COVID-19 vaccine doses have been administered across Ontario. In the Porcupine Health Unit area, a total of 15,113 doses have been administered since the start of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution rollout.

Getting vaccinated is quick and easy. Once you are eligible, book your appointment as soon as possible [online](#), or by calling 705-360-4819 or 1-800-461-1818. There are several dates and times available, and appointments usually only take about 30 minutes from start to finish.

Planning

The multiple ongoing collaborations with community partners across the Porcupine Health Unit district have resulted in success of vaccine distribution throughout [Phase One](#) of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout. These partnerships have ensured that the requirements outlined in [Ontario's Vaccine Distribution Implementation Plan](#) and the principles set out in the [Ethical framework for COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#) have been considered throughout each planning stage. These collaborations remain essential to the ongoing success during all subsequent steps of the vaccine rollout. Currently:

- The Porcupine Health Unit is working directly with high-risk congregate living settings to plan upcoming clinics for residents, essential caregivers, and staff.
- The health unit is collaborating with primary care and other health care partners to identify and plan COVID-19 immunization clinics for individuals with highest-risk, high-risk, and at-risk health conditions as listed in the [Guidance for Prioritization of Phase 2 Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination](#) document.
- Planning is always underway in preparation for successive population groups that will become eligible for vaccination in coming weeks to ensure a seamless transition throughout each eligible population group.

The Porcupine Health Unit:

- [The Porcupine Health Unit has expanded into Phase 2 of the COVID-19 vaccine rollout](#). COVID-19 vaccine clinics have already begun for some populations included in [Phase Two](#) of the provincial vaccination plan.
- The health unit will continue to announce clinics in communities across the district for eligible age groups (in decreasing 5-year age increments), and for individuals with highest-risk, high-risk,

and at-risk health conditions as we progress over the next several weeks. As more vaccines are received and additional clinics are scheduled, clinic dates and times will be announced through local media, [Facebook](#) and on the [health unit's website](#).

- The health unit continues to ensure access to the COVID-19 vaccine for populations included in [Phase One](#) of the provincial vaccination plan.
- Appointments are required for all COVID-19 mass immunization clinics. To view upcoming clinic dates and to register, visit the [COVID-19 vaccination booking system](#). COVID-19 vaccine appointments for eligible individuals may also be booked by calling the Porcupine Health Unit at 705-360-4819 or 1-800-461-1818.
- The following documents from the Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care must be reviewed before receiving the COVID-19 vaccine:
 - [COVID-19 Vaccine Information Sheet](#)
 - [What you need to know about your COVID-19 vaccine appointment](#)
 - [COVID-19 Vaccination Recommendations for Special Populations](#)
- The Porcupine Health Unit COVID-19 vaccine clinic schedule can be found under the [COVID-19 Vaccine](#) area of the health unit's website.

COVID-19 Daily Update

Thursday, April 8, 2021

 Vaccine Plan	APR 5-11	APR 12-18	PLANNING UNDERWAY
Individuals eligible in Phase 1 of province's plan	✓	✓	
Adults 75 years and older	✓	✓	
Adults in high-risk congregate settings	✓	✓	
Adults 70 years and older	✓	✓	
Adults 65 years and older		✓	
Adults with highest risk medical conditions			✓
Adults 60 years and older			✓

This immunization schedule depends on vaccine supply.

- The health unit will follow the Ontario Government's [Guidance for Prioritization of Phase 2 populations for COVID-19 Vaccination](#) to plan vaccine clinics across the region.
- The rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan continues to be dependent on the vaccine supply.
- If you or a loved one are eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine but are experiencing barriers to accessing the vaccine clinics and need support, call the health unit at 705-360-4819 or 1-800-461-1818.

Vaccine Rollout & Announcements

The province of [Ontario is increasing the number of pharmacies and primary care settings that are available to offer the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine](#) to individuals 55 years of age and older. On April 1, 2021, the Ontario government announced that almost 700 pharmacy locations are now available to administer the vaccine, and that a total of 1500 pharmacies will be offering vaccines by the end of the month. This is important as it allows for increased capacity to ensure more individuals can conveniently receive the COVID-19 vaccine sooner. A list of [COVID-19 pharmacy vaccine locations](#) offering the AstraZeneca vaccine can be found online. The following pharmacies in the Porcupine Health Unit area are now offering the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to people 55 years of age and older:

- Wallace Drug Store: 109 6th Avenue Cochrane, ON. Call 705-272-4381 to make an appointment.
- Rexall: 142 Progress Crescent Kapuskasing, ON. Call 705-337-1777 or visit www.rexall.ca/covid-19/vaccines to make an appointment.
- Shoppers Drug Mart: 681 Algonquin Boulevard East Unit 5 Timmins, ON. Call 705-264-6511 or visit www.shoppersdrugmart.ca/covid19 to make an appointment.

In addition, two primary care teams in the health unit district are offering the AstraZeneca COVID-19 vaccine to individuals 55 years of age and older. Primary care team offices will be contacting eligible clients to book COVID-19 vaccine appointments:

- Timmins Academic Family Health Team
- Kapuskasing and Area Family Health Team

On April 6, 2021, the provincial government announced that [Ontario is moving to Phase Two of the COVID-19 Vaccine Distribution Plan](#). [Phase Two](#) is focused on age and at-risk populations to prevent death, severe illness, and hospitalization. As part of [Phase Two](#), there will also be a focus on administering vaccines to adults living in COVID-19 hot spot communities across 13 health units in Ontario where there are high rates of death, hospitalization and spread of COVID-19. The province has not identified the Porcupine Health Unit as a COVID-19 hot spot. Based on vaccine supply being received as planned by the federal government, over nine million people in Ontario will be able to receive the first dose of COVID-19 vaccine between April and the end of June 2021.

Prioritization of Phase 2 Populations Guidance Document

The Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care has created a [guidance document](#) to assist with sequencing of eligible [Phase Two](#) populations in the COVID-19 vaccine distribution rollout. Below is an overview of the Phase Two schedule.

Overview of Phase Two

Projected Phase Two sequencing April to June

Phase 2			
	April	May	June
Older Adults	Over 75		
	Over 70		
	Over 65		
	Over 60		
Health Conditions	Individuals with Health Conditions		
	Highest Risk & Caregivers	High Risk & Certain Caregivers	At-Risk Health Conditions
Congregate Settings	High Risk Congregate Settings		
Hot Spots	COVID-19 Hot Spots Communities		
	Highest Risk Communities	Remaining Hot Spots Communities	
Cannot-Work-From-Home		Essential Workers who cannot work from home	
		Group 1	Group 2



The recommendations included in the [Guidance for Prioritization of Phase 2 Populations for COVID-19 Vaccination](#) document, are based on ethics to achieve the goal of preventing death, severe illness, and hospitalizations. All recommendations included in the guidance document must be considered along with local context when planning for distribution of COVID-19 vaccines in all health unit regions. Refer to the [full list of priority populations](#) for the [Phase Two](#) COVID-19 vaccine distribution plan.

Primary Priority groups in [Phase Two](#) includes:

- Older adults (60 to 79): starting with those aged 75 to 79 and decreasing in 5-year age increments.
- Residents, essential caregivers, and staff of high-risk congregated living settings.
- People with health conditions and certain caregivers starting with those at highest-risk, then those at high-risk, followed by people who are at-risk due to health conditions.

Secondary Priority groups in [Phase Two](#) includes:

- Remaining individuals with at-risk health conditions.
- Essential workers who cannot work from home, beginning with those in the First Group, followed by those in the Second Group as outlined in the [guidance document](#).

Resources

The Porcupine Health Unit wants to keep you informed about COVID-19 vaccines. Our website now includes a [COVID-19 Vaccine page](#) with more information on approved vaccines, vaccine safety and other general information.

Our COVID-19 Information lines remain open. Call us with any COVID-19 related questions you have at 705-360-4819 or 1-800-461-1818.

Employment and Volunteer Opportunities



The Porcupine Health Unit continues to recruit staff and volunteers to support COVID-19 vaccination across the district:

- Visit [Employment \(porcupinehu.on.ca\)](https://porcupinehu.on.ca/employment) to find out about employment opportunities or call 1-800-461-1818. Individuals who are seeking employment with the health unit should email information and resume to careers@porcupinehu.on.ca.
- Community partners and independent volunteers are of great value to the rollout of COVID-19 vaccines across the district. Email vaccinesupport@porcupinehu.on.ca with your offer of support.

Moving forward

It is best to receive the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as you become eligible.

Vaccines protect people before they become sick. Vaccines train the body's immune system to build antibodies (immunity) in the same way as if you were exposed to the disease naturally, but without the risks associated with the illness. Vaccines are safe and effective. Vaccines save lives and prevent severe illness and hospitalizations. The risk of complications from getting the real disease is far greater than the risk of side effects from vaccines.

Getting the vaccine is easy. Book your appointment [online](#), or by calling the health unit at 705-360-4819 or 1-800-461-1818. Appointments are quick and generally take about 30 minutes from start to finish.

Additional Information

[Vaccine development and approval in Canada - Canada.ca](#)

[COVID-19: How vaccines are developed \(video\) - Canada.ca](#)

[Getting a COVID-19 vaccine in Ontario | COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) in Ontario](#)

[COVID-19 vaccines for Ontario | COVID-19 \(coronavirus\) in Ontario](#)

[COVID-19 pharmacy vaccine locations \(ontario.ca\)](#)

[Ethical framework for COVID-19 vaccine distribution](#)

[Vaccines and treatments for COVID-19: Vaccine rollout - Canada.ca](#)

[Update and Plans for Phase 2 - Vaccine Distribution Plan - April to June 2021](#)