



The Regional Municipality of Durham Health Department

News Release

Health Department updates COVID-19 vaccination eligibility

Whitby, Ontario, August 18, 2021 – Durham Region Health Department is updating eligibility for the COVID-19 vaccine to include third doses for individuals most at-risk of serious illness from the virus. In addition, eligibility is being expanded to include all youth born in 2009, allowing youth that are turning 12 later in 2021 earlier opportunities to be vaccinated.

On Aug. 17, the Ontario government announced that third doses of COVID-19 vaccine will be offered to specific vulnerable populations who are at highest-risk of a reduced or waning immune response to the vaccine.

These highest-risk individuals should not attend vaccination clinics at this time. Their health care provider will contact them about how to access their third dose, which can be given at a minimum of eight weeks following their second dose.

Third doses will be offered to the following individuals:

- Transplant recipients (including solid organ transplant and hematopoietic stem cell transplants);
- Patients with hematological cancers (examples include lymphoma, myeloma, leukemia) on active treatment (chemotherapy, targeted therapies, immunotherapy) for malignant hematologic disorders;
- Recipients of an anti-CD20 agent (e.g., rituximab, ocrelizumab, ofatumumab).

Residents of long-term care homes, licensed retirement homes identified as higher-risk by the province and First Nations elder care lodges are also eligible to receive a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine, which can be given at a minimum of five months following their second dose. The Health Department is working with these facilities to coordinate vaccination of residents.

In addition, the Health Department will extend eligibility to youth born in 2009 and turning 12 years old in 2021. These individuals can receive Pfizer vaccine beginning Aug. 18 at Durham Region mass immunization, mobile and pop-up clinics. Vaccine can also be accessed at some pharmacies and through health care providers in the community. For more information on clinic locations and hours, visit www.durham.ca/covidvaccines.

- 30 -

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If this information is required in an accessible format, please call 1-800-841-2729 ext. 2952