

COVID-19 vaccination information for patients 80-plus

With Ontario set to expand vaccination to those age 80 and older, the OCFP has compiled answers to common questions.

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- **How will I know when it's my turn to get the vaccine and where to go to get vaccinated?**

It's expected that adults aged 80 years of age and older, starting March 15, will be able to book an appointment to receive the vaccine. Bookings can be done through an online system or by phone and the vaccine will be administered at a vaccine site in your community. More information will be communicated publicly when it's available.

- **My spouse is younger than 80. When will he/she get vaccinated?**

According to the current provincial schedule, people 75 and older qualify to be vaccinated starting April 15, those 70 and older can start getting shots beginning May 1, and people aged 65 and older will be vaccinated starting June 1. Here's a [graph of the distribution plan](#). This plan is subject to the current vaccine availability and may change.

- **Why can't I get the vaccine in my family doctor's office?**

Local Public Health Units are managing the vaccine rollout and vaccination right now is happening mostly in mass vaccination sites, mobile sites, and likely pharmacies. Family doctors may be vaccinating in our offices in later phases of the rollout.

- **Can I choose which brand of vaccine I get?**

The vaccine you receive will depend mostly on what's available. Before approving any vaccine, Health Canada conducts a rigorous review process to make sure it's safe for Canadians.

- **I can't leave the house. How do I get the vaccine?**

We understand that plans are being developed by local Public Health Units to bring the vaccine to those 80 years of age and older who are housebound. Watch for more details about plans in your community.

- **Once I'm vaccinated, can I get together with my friends and family who have also received the vaccine?**

At this time, though the vaccine will protect you, it hasn't yet been proven that getting vaccinated will stop you from carrying the virus and possibly infecting others. You should continue to follow all public health measures, including physical distancing, wearing a mask and hand hygiene. Socializing with people in other households is still discouraged for now.

- **I take several prescription medications. Do I need to stop them before I get the vaccine?**

No. We do not know of any medications you have to stop in order to get the vaccine.

- **Are there any reasons NOT to get the vaccine?**

There are very few reasons not to get vaccinated. We know the vaccine is safe and effective for older patients.

Contraindications to vaccination include having had a severe allergy (anaphylaxis) to the first dose of the vaccine or if you know you are allergic to one of the ingredients. In those cases, you will need to be assessed by your allergist for a vaccination plan. If you don't have an allergist, speak to your family doctor about getting a referral.

Also, speak to your treating physicians if you have an autoimmune or immunodeficiency condition, or are immunosuppressed due to disease or treatment.

Finally, you should delay getting vaccinated if you have a fever or are acutely unwell. If you have a mild cold or sniffles, you can get the vaccine.