

**To:** Nova Scotia Health Care Practitioners and Immunizers

**From:** Dr. Robert Strang, Chief Medical Officer of Health

**Date:** August 26, 2022

**Re:** *5 to 11 Pfizer Pediatric COVID-19 Booster and Fall Campaign*

---

#### 5 to 11 Pfizer Pediatric COVID-19 Booster

On August 19, 2022 [Health Canada authorized](#) the use of Pfizer's pediatric COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) as a booster dose for children aged 5 to 11 years of age. On the same day, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) published [recommendations](#) for the use of Pfizer's pediatric COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) as a booster dose in this age group.

In response, the following updates have been made to the Nova Scotia COVID-19 vaccine program:

1. Pfizer's pediatric COVID-19 vaccine (10 mcg) may be given as a booster dose to children aged 5 to 11 years of age who have completed their primary series.
2. Most children aged 5 to 11 can receive their booster dose 168 days following the completion of their 2-dose primary series. Children in this age group who are moderately to severely immunocompromised can receive their booster dose 120 days following the completion of their 3-dose primary series.
3. It is recommended that most children previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 wait 168 days after they developed symptoms or tested positive (if no symptoms) before receiving a booster dose. For children who are moderately to severely immunocompromised, it is recommended to wait 120 days after a SARS-CoV-2 infection before receiving a booster dose.

NACI has issued a strong recommendation that children aged 5 to 11 with an underlying medical condition that places them at high risk of severe illness due to COVID-19 should receive a booster dose. This includes children with obesity, who are medically fragile or have medical complexities, who have more than one comorbidity or neurological disorders, or who have Down syndrome or immunocompromising conditions. All other children may be offered a booster dose, as per NACI's discretionary recommendation. In addition, providers are asked to encourage any children in this age group who have not yet completed their primary series to do so.

Appointments for booster doses of Pfizer pediatric COVID-19 vaccine in the 5 to 11 age group are expected to open in early September.

For more information, see [Health Canada's authorization](#) of Pfizer's pediatric COVID-19 vaccine (10mcg) for use as a booster dose in children aged 5 to 11, the NACI [statement](#) and [summary](#), and the [updated product monograph](#).

## Fall Campaign

On June 29, 2022 NACI published [interim guidance on planning considerations for a fall 2022 COVID-19 booster program](#). In response, Nova Scotia plans to implement the following changes to the COVID-19 vaccine program:

1. In the fall of 2022, all Nova Scotians aged 12 and older who have completed their primary series will be eligible to receive a dose of COVID-19 vaccine, regardless of the number of booster doses previously received, provided the minimum interval since last vaccination has passed.
2. Consistent with Nova Scotia's current program, the interval for most individuals in Nova Scotia will be 168 days since last vaccination with some groups eligible for a shortened interval period of 120 days.
3. It is recommended that most individuals previously infected with SARS-CoV-2 wait 168 days after they developed symptoms or tested positive (if no symptoms) before receiving the fall dose. For those groups eligible for a shortened interval of 120 days, it is recommended to wait 120 days after a SARS-CoV-2 infection before receiving the fall dose.

NACI recommends that individuals who are at increased risk of severe illness from COVID-19 should be offered a fall dose. These high-risk groups, outlined in the [NACI statement](#), will be prioritized to receive a fall dose first. All other adults may receive a fall dose once their eligibility opens later in the campaign.

Hybrid immunity, the protection derived from both SARS-CoV-2 infection and up to date vaccination against COVID-19, has been shown to provide more robust immunity than that acquired from vaccination or infection alone. Individuals should be encouraged to receive a fall dose even if they have had a SARS-CoV-2 infection, provided the appropriate time since infection has passed, so they can benefit from hybrid immunity.

Nova Scotia will develop an implementation strategy for bivalent COVID-19 vaccines if and when these products are authorized by Health Canada and become available for use.

More detailed information will be forthcoming closer to the launch of the fall campaign. The campaign is expected to open in mid-September.