



# RENFREW COUNTY AND DISTRICT HEALTH UNIT

## COVID-19 Vaccine Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs): What You Need to Know About a Third Dose

### Eligibility and Timing

#### 1. Who is required to have mandatory COVID-19 vaccination policies at this time?

To protect vulnerable patients and staff in settings where the risk of contracting and transmitting COVID-19 and the Delta variant is higher, the Chief Medical Officer of Health has issued a directive mandating hospitals and home and community care service providers to have a COVID-19 vaccination policy for employees, staff, contractors, students and volunteers, and for ambulance services to have a COVID-19 vaccination policy for paramedics. The vaccination policy must be effective no later than September 7, 2021, and at a minimum will require these individuals to provide proof of one of three things:

- Full vaccination against COVID-19;
- A medical reason for not being vaccinated against COVID-19; or
- Completion of a COVID-19 vaccination educational session.

The Ministry of Education intends to introduce a vaccination disclosure policy for all publicly-funded school board employees, and staff in private schools as well as for all staff in licensed child care settings for the 2021-22 school year, with rapid antigen testing requirements for staff who are not immunized against COVID-19.

Vaccination policies will also be implemented in other higher-risk settings such as:

- Post-secondary institutions;
- Licensed retirement homes;
- Women's shelters; and
- Congregate group homes and day programs for adults with developmental disabilities, children's treatment centres and other services for children with special needs, and licensed children's residential settings.

#### 2. Who is currently eligible to receive a third dose of the COVID-19 vaccine?

The Ontario Government has begun offering third doses of the COVID-19 vaccine to the most vulnerable Ontarians. This includes:

- Those undergoing active treatment for solid tumors;
- Those who are in receipt of chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-T-cell;
- Those with moderate or severe primary immunodeficiency (e.g., DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome);
- Stage 3 or advanced untreated HIV infection and those with acquired immunodeficiency syndrome;
- Those undergoing treatment in the following categories of immunosuppressive therapies: anti-B cell therapies (monoclonal antibodies targeting CD19, CD20 and CD22), high dose systemic



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corticosteroids, alkylating agents, antimetabolites, or tumor-necrosis factor (TNF) inhibitors or other biologic agents that are significantly immunosuppressive;

- 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);
- Recipients of an anti-CD20 agent (e.g., rituximab, ocrelizumab, ofatumumab); and
- Residents of high-risk congregate settings including long-term care homes, higher-risk licensed retirement homes and First Nations elder care lodges.

Individuals who are eligible (immunocompromised) should receive their third dose at least 2 months after their second dose. However, exact timing should be decided with their HCP. Vulnerable Elderly in High-Risk congregate settings should allow at least 5 months between their second and third dose.

### 3. What if I am an employee, staff member, contractor, student, volunteer, or paramedic, and not fully vaccinated?

Individuals who do not provide proof of full vaccination against COVID-19 will be required to undertake regular antigen testing.

### 4. How do I prove I am fully vaccinated?

Individuals can prove they are fully vaccinated by showing the physical or emailed receipt that was provided to them at the time of vaccination. [Vaccination receipts can also be downloaded or printed through the provincial portal](#) or by calling the Provincial Vaccine Booking Line at 1-833-943-3900. These versions of the vaccine receipts contain a watermark and a digital signature to deter forgery.

### 5. What do I need to confirm proof of eligibility for specific high-risk populations?

Vaccination appointments will be made using a trust model. High-risk populations who are eligible for a third dose are recommended to get the same vaccine as their second dose if possible.

### 6. How will I know when/if it is my turn to receive a third dose?

Please continue to monitor the [RCDHU COVID-19 vaccine rollout webpage](#) for future updates and/or RCDHU's Facebook or Twitter.

## Booking an Appointment

### 7. Do I need to book an appointment to get a third dose?

Currently, residents who are eligible to receive a third dose do not need to book an



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appointment. Residents are asked to attend one of the walk-in or pop-up clinics across Renfrew County and District. Clinic schedules can be found on [RCDHU's COVID-19 vaccine rollout webpage](#) and/or RCDHU's Facebook or Twitter.

### 8. Do we get to choose which vaccine we get?

Some clinics will allow residents to choose which vaccine they get. This will be based on provincial distribution, availability to local regions and supply. Remember “the best vaccine, is the one that is available to you”.

## Precautions to take after receiving a vaccination

### 9. What are the side effects of the COVID-19 vaccines?

Some people may experience moderate side effects from the vaccine that will likely resolve after a few days. Some of the symptoms are part of the body's response to developing immunity and indicate that the vaccine is working.

Common side effects include one or more of the following symptoms: pain where the needle was given, redness and swelling, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, joint pain, chills, mild fever, swollen glands (less frequently). These types of side effects are expected and indicate that the vaccine is working to produce protection. These side effects are more likely to occur after your second dose.

As with any medicines and vaccines, allergic reactions are rare but can occur after receiving a vaccine. If you are concerned about any reactions you experience after receiving the vaccine, contact your health care provider. You can also contact Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) to ask questions or report an adverse reaction. Visit the Ministry of Health and Long-term Care [COVID-19 Vaccine-Relevant Information and Planning Resources](#).