

COVID-19 COMMUNITY VACCINATION CLINICS FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Last revised: March 2, 2021

Who can get the vaccine?

COVID-19 vaccine appointments are ONLY for those [eligible groups](#) that live or work in Simcoe Muskoka (including those with secondary residences here). Proof of primary or secondary residence will be required when you attend your appointment. We book appointments based on the availability of vaccine, which is subject to change. Do not drop into a local clinic unless you have an appointment. As vaccine supply increases, so too will appointments. We thank you for your patience.

When can I get vaccinated?

We understand that many people want to know when they will be able to get the vaccine. Due to limited vaccine supply, we are currently vaccinating only PHASE 1 priority populations. It is expected to take well into April to immunize these groups. For information on the next groups to be immunized in Phase 2 and 3 see the [Ontario government's three-phased vaccine distribution implementation plan](#).

How will I know when it is my turn to get the vaccine?

Our website will be kept up to date with who is currently eligible to book their appointment. We will also use our local media to help us share this information. Please check regularly to see if it is your turn to book your appointment.

Who should talk to their primary care provider before getting the vaccine?

Anyone looking for more information on the COVID-19 vaccine as it relates to their personal health situation is encouraged to discuss with their doctor. Anyone who fits into one of the following special patient groups should speak with their doctor ahead of booking their appointment to ensure the vaccine is right for them:

- Those who are pregnant
- Those who have autoimmune conditions or are immunocompromised (due to disease or treatment)
- Those who have had a severe allergic reaction or anaphylaxis to a previous dose of a COVID-19 mRNA vaccine or to any of its components.

You can review [vaccination recommendations for special populations](#) for more information.

I am in the current eligible group but there are no more appointments available in the booking system. What should I do?

Appointments are only made available once we have confirmation of our vaccine supply, so for the time being appointments will only be made available a week at a time. We encourage people who are currently eligible to join the waitlist for their group in their area. As more appointments are available, we will be using these waitlists to fill new available appointments first. Any remaining will then be made available on the booking site.

My family member does not have a computer to do online booking, how can she book her appointment?

You can book an appointment online on their behalf, or they can call us at 1-877-721-7520 and we will book their appointment for her.

If you need help booking an appointment, please call 1-877-721-7520. We encourage online booking as much as possible as the quickest way. Please note that there may be high call volumes, and it may take some time to get back to you.

Does it matter which vaccination location a person chooses?

As long as the person works and lives in our health unit region and fits the criteria for the group, i.e. over 85, they can book at a location of their choosing. We do however recommend that people try to book their vaccination appointment close to their home address.

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Can I book an appointment for someone else?

Yes you can book an appointment for someone else. At this time you need their full name, birthdate, and contact information.

Is there a waitlist that I can join?

Yes. However only those eligible to receive the vaccine are able to be placed on a waitlist if all appointments are full. Please check our website often to see if you are eligible to book your vaccination. There is not a waitlist for people who are not yet eligible to receive the vaccine.

Are there checks and balances to make sure people don't jump the line when making their appointment?

When people show up for their appointment they are required to provide proof they belong to an eligible priority group (e.g. proof of age, profession, employment, essential caregiver status etc.) If they have booked an appointment and are not eligible, they will be turned away from the clinic.

When you arrive for your appointment, please bring proof as identified above so that we can confirm who you are and that you are part of a priority group.

My family member is frail and needs someone to attend the appointment with them, is this possible?

Yes. One person can accompany a client to their appointment if they need assistance. Everyone needs to ensure they are following public health measures.

My family member is too frail to make it to a clinic, how do they get their vaccination?

Some regions offer drive thru clinics for vaccination, and we hope to offer more of these in the future. If you need assistance at a clinic, please see the clinic coordinator or screener who will be able to help.

I do not have a car or access to public transportation. How can I get to my appointment?

Please call us at 705-721-7520 (1-877-721-7520) and we will work through options with you.

Are there any other options for vaccinations besides community clinics?

We are looking at all opportunities for vaccination, including mobile clinics, future drive through locations and pop up clinics. Eventually, vaccine will be available through pharmacies and your family doctor as well. But for right now, the majority of the vaccine will be delivered at mass community clinics.

If I can't get an appointment and the clinics move on to the next eligible group, have I missed my opportunity to get an appointment?

No you can still make an appointment for your vaccination.

Why is the roll out of the vaccination so slow?

The roll out of the vaccination clinics is dependent upon the amount of the vaccine we receive. As more vaccine becomes available, clinics will ramp up and more appointments and options for getting your vaccination will be available.

Can I get vaccinated by my family physician or at my local pharmacy?

Not at this time, however as vaccine types and supply permits, we will be working with health care providers and pharmacies for more widely distributed vaccine delivery in the future.

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Do I still have to practice public health measures like wearing a mask and physical distancing once I'm vaccinated?

Yes. Until a vaccine is widely available and a large percentage of the population becomes immune to COVID-19, we all have to continue to follow public health measures and rules for our region and continue to take everyday actions to help stop the spread of the virus. Why?

- While the vaccine(s) offers protection against COVID-19, there is not sufficient data yet on prevention of transmission.
- It takes time for a vaccine to develop its protective effects (ie. a month or longer).
- We are still experiencing high COVID-19 infection rates, which has placed intense strain on our hospitals and health systems, as well as the health care workers who have been on the front lines of this crisis for many months.
- Not everyone will get the vaccine, meaning there will still be a risk of transmission.

For these reasons it is important that everyone, including those who have been vaccinated, continue to physical distance, wear a mask when we can't, and wash/sanitize our hands frequently.

What if I decide to wait?

If you are among a priority group, getting your first dose as soon as you are eligible will help protect you from COVID-19. COVID-19 can be a serious illness for many people and for some people the symptoms can last for months. Getting vaccinated is a safe and effective way to build protection against the virus.