

COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATE #28 FROM HALTON REGION PUBLIC HEALTH

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TO: Halton Physicians, Nurse Practitioners, Emergency Departments, other Healthcare Providers

FROM: Dr. Joanna Oda, Associate Medical Officer of Health

DATE: April 19, 2021

RE: COVID-19 vaccine update 28: vaccine safety, allergy contraindications, updated physician form for patients with medical exceptions to extended interval, updated HCP patient toolkit

QUICK FACTS

- [Register for Wednesday's virtual Health Care Provider Town Hall](#) (5-6 p.m.) with Halton Region Public Health for an update on COVID-19 and the COVID-19 vaccine roll out in Halton.
- Three Health Canada approved vaccines are currently available in Halton – Pfizer, Moderna, AstraZeneca.
- We are seeing an increase in people 'vaccine shopping.' Please encourage patients to access the first vaccine that is available to them. Do not write notes for a particular brand of vaccine. The best vaccine for people to receive is the first one offered to them.
- Starting this Tuesday, Halton residents 40+ are able to get vaccinated in [local pharmacies](#).
- Physicians and nurse practitioners can ask [COVID-19 vaccine allergy related clinical questions](#) to Allergy & Clinical Immunology specialists electronically and receive a response within days through the [OTNhub.ca](#).
- Patients with food, drug or environmental allergies, do NOT need an allergist assessment, but should be observed for a minimum of 15-30 minutes following vaccination.
- Halton Region Public Health has updated the [Healthcare Provider patient toolkit](#) which includes a variety of print and digital materials to help promote COVID-19 immunization to include the new eligible populations. Order print materials using our [online order form](#). The materials will be mailed directly to you and should arrive within 7 days. Social media content is available to download at a [shared folder/BOX drive](#).

UPDATES TO MEDICAL EXCEPTIONS TO EXTENDED INTERVAL

- Patients who are eligible for a Ministry approved medical exception to the extended interval can now book their appointment online and receive a shorter interval
- Clients eligible for the shortened interval will require their physician to complete the attached updated Medical Exceptions to Extended Interval Form – April 18, 2021
- All Ministry-approved exceptions have been identified on the form. No additional exceptions can be added.
- Clients who have already had a first dose and require the shorter interval should call 311 to rebook their second appointment and will require the completed form at their appointment.
- Other patients currently eligible for vaccination due to medical conditions not listed on the form, do not need a physician to complete a form. The patient will complete an attestation at their appointment.

ALLERGY CONTRAINDICATIONS TO COVID-19 VACCINE

- While true anaphylaxis to a vaccine component is rare, Health Canada **does not** recommend any vaccine for people with:
 - proven immediate or anaphylactic hypersensitivity to any component of the vaccine or its container, including polyethylene glycol (PEG) or
 - a history of anaphylaxis after previous administration of the vaccine.
- Though patients allergic to PEG may also be allergic to polysorbate 80, unless the patient has a known allergy to polysorbate 80, this should not be a contraindication to receiving the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Please report all suspected/confirmed cases of [Diseases of Public Health Significance](#) to Public Health immediately by calling 311, 905-825-6000 or toll free at 1-866-442-5866.

PLEASE PROVIDE A COPY TO ALL PHYSICIANS IN YOUR OFFICE AND/OR POST IN EMERGENCY DEPARTMENTS AND PHYSICIAN LOUNGES. IF YOU HAVE ANY ISSUES WITH THIS ATTACHMENT, PLEASE EMAIL DOCTORS@HALTON.CA.

- If you have questions about patient eligibility for COVID-19 vaccine due to previous reactions or allergic history, you can ask [COVID-19 vaccine allergy related clinical questions](#) to Allergy & Clinical Immunology specialists electronically and receive a response within days through the [OTNhub.ca](#).

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

- [Register for Halton Region Public Health's virtual Health Care Provider Town Hall](#), April 21, 2021
- [Allergy advice for COVID-19 vaccine](#), eConsult, 2021
- [COVID-19 vaccine allergy information](#), Community for Effective Practice
- [Vaccine fact sheets for patients \(AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson\)](#), Community for Effective Practice
- [COVID-19 vaccine Frequently Asked Questions in Halton](#), [halton.ca/COVIDvaccines](#)



Medical Exceptions to Extended Interval Form

Clients eligible for a **Ministry approved medical exception** to the extended dose interval are to bring this form to their physician for completion prior to booking their vaccine appointments, indicating they have one of the medical exceptions listed below. This completed form must be brought to each vaccination appointment.

To book an appointment, please visit www.halton.ca/vaccine and book under "Individuals with Health Conditions". Only those with the specific health conditions identified below will be eligible for a shorter interval.

*If you have already received your first dose, please provide your physician with the proof of vaccination slip and **call 311** to book your second dose. Efforts will be made to schedule the second dose as close as possible to the recommended interval. You must bring this completed form to your second dose appointment. Vaccine for shorter intervals will not be administered without the completed form.*

Client Information

Client Last Name	Click or tap here to enter text.
Client First Name	Click or tap here to enter text.
Health Card Number	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date of Birth	Click or tap to enter a date.

Physician Information

Has the client named above received a first dose?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Not Sure
If yes, which vaccine was received?	Click or tap here to enter text.
If yes, what was the date of the first dose?	Click or tap to enter a date.
Reason for exception to extended vaccine dose interval? NOTE: Additional exceptions cannot be added to this form. Any additions will not result in patients receiving a shorter interval.	<input type="checkbox"/> Transplant recipient (including solid organ transplants and hematopoietic stem cell transplants) <input type="checkbox"/> Individual with malignant hematologic disorder receiving active treatment (specifically chemotherapy, target therapies, or immunotherapy) <input type="checkbox"/> Individual with non-hematologic malignant solid tumor receiving active treatment (specifically chemotherapy, target therapies, or immunotherapy)
Physician Name	Click or tap here to enter text.
Phone Number	Click or tap here to enter text.
Date	Click or tap to enter a date.
Signature	

Telephone and Auto-attendant Scripts

Script 1: When calling/speaking to someone eligible for vaccination

Good morning/afternoon, this is [name] from [practice]. I am calling to let you know that Halton Region has announced expanded eligibility for Halton Residents. The following additional groups are now eligible:

- Individuals with highest-risk and high-risk health conditions and one essential caregiver
- Essential workers who cannot work from home and are part of [Group 1](#) as identified by Province:
- Adults 50 years of age and older living in the L9E postal code area, in Milton.
- Remaining health care workers who live or work in Halton and cannot work from home.

You will need to book an appointment before going to a clinic; walk-ins are not accepted. To book an appointment, you can visit halton.ca/COVIDvaccines (that's H A L T O N dot CA, forward slash C O V I D vaccines).

If you are not able to book an appointment online, you can call 311 and a customer service representative can help you.

Thanks for speaking with me today.

Script 2: When calling/speaking to a caregiver/family member of someone who is eligible for vaccination

Good morning/afternoon, this is [name] from [practice]. I am calling to let you know that Halton Region has announced an expanded eligibility for COVID-19 vaccination.

It is my understanding that you may have someone meeting this prioritization living with you, or you may be caring for someone in this group?

You will need to book an appointment before going to a clinic; walk-ins are not accepted. To book an appointment, you can visit halton.ca/COVIDvaccines (that's H A L T O N dot CA, forward slash C O V I D vaccines).

Thank you for taking the time to help our older adult community get vaccinated. Thanks for speaking with me today.

Auto-attendant greeting

Thank you for calling [practice/facility name]. We want to remind our community that Halton has expanded the eligibility groups who can now book an appointment to receive their COVID-19 vaccine at a Halton Region clinic. To learn more or to book an appointment, please visit halton.ca/COVIDvaccines. Thank you.

Newsletter insert or email

More eligible groups can start booking their COVID-19 vaccine appointment on Friday, April 16

Halton Region has announced that starting Friday, April 16, the following groups can book their vaccine appointment at a Halton Region Vaccination Clinic. Please note that Halton Region continues to follow Provincial direction [for prioritization](#) and does not have the authority to make exceptions.

1. Individuals with highest-risk and high-risk health conditions and one essential caregiver:

- *highest-risk health conditions include:* organ transplant recipients; hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients; and people with neurological diseases in which respiratory function may be compromised (e.g., motor neuron disease, myasthenia gravis, multiple sclerosis), haematological malignancy diagnosed within the past year, or kidney disease (eGFR <30): and
- *high-risk health conditions include:* obesity (body mass index over 40), or receiving treatments causing immunosuppression (e.g., chemotherapy, immunity-weakening medications), and intellectual or developmental disabilities (e.g., Down syndrome).
- *One essential caregiver:* An essential caregiver is someone providing direct, frequent and sustained in-person personal care and/or assistance with activities of daily living to the individual. Primary essential caregivers are included for individuals in the High-Risk Health Conditions group who require regular and sustained assistance with personal care and/or activities of daily living.

2. Essential workers who cannot work from home ([Group 1](#) as identified by Province):

- elementary/secondary school workers (including educators, custodial, school bus drivers, administrative staff);
- workers responding to critical events (including police, fire, special constables, children's aid society workers, emergency management, and critical infrastructure restoration workers);
- enforcement, inspection and compliance roles (including by-law enforcement, building inspectors, food inspectors, animal welfare inspectors, border inspection officers, and labour inspectors/WSIB field workers);
- individuals working in childcare as follows:
 - all licensees, employees and students on an educational placement who interact directly with children in licensed childcare centres and in authorized recreation and skill building programs; and
 - licensed home child care and in-home service providers, employees of a home child care agency and students on an educational placement.

- foster care agency workers (including customary care providers);
- food manufacturing and distribution workers;
- agriculture and farm workers; and
- funeral, crematorium and cemetery workers.

Note: Eligible workers will be required to present a [signed COVID-19 Vaccine Proof of Employment Attestation Form](#) as proof of employment at their vaccination appointment.

3. **Adults 50+ in an identified hot spot area (Adults 50 years of age and older living in the L9E postal code area in Milton).**
4. **Remaining health care workers who live or work in Halton and cannot work from home.**

The availability of appointments will be contingent on supply. These groups are in addition to those [who are currently eligible](#).

Eligible residents can book appointments at any one of Halton's six COVID-19 Vaccination Clinics located in Burlington (including Joseph Brant Hospital), Halton Hills, Milton and Oakville (including Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital). Residents are reminded that parking is free at Joseph Brant Hospital and Oakville Trafalgar Memorial Hospital for those with scheduled appointments at these clinics.

Please book your appointment through Halton's [online booking system](#) or if you require assistance call 311. Bookings for Halton's clinics are not available through the Provincial booking system; residents who access the Provincial booking system will be redirected to Halton's system.

In addition to Halton's community clinics, the Provincial Government has added more Halton locations to their pharmacy program. Halton residents 55+ are strongly encouraged to book an appointment at a participating pharmacy location of their choice to receive the AstraZeneca vaccine. The AstraZeneca vaccine is safe and effective in preventing severe illness and complications from COVID-19 and is another option to gain protection as early as possible. Earlier appointments may be available through this program, and eligible residents are encouraged to book an appointment as soon as possible in order to gain protection from COVID-19. Residents will need to book their appointments directly through the pharmacy's website; **Halton Region's booking system for our community clinics will not be accepting appointments for pharmacy locations**. For more information and to find a participating pharmacy, please refer to the [Province's COVID-19 pharmacy vaccine locations webpage](#).

The Region is updating COVID-19 vaccine data Monday to Friday on Halton's [COVID-19 Vaccines webpage](#), which also includes information about the number of doses administered at community and hospital-based clinics, mobile clinics, pharmacies, and physicians in Halton pharmacies.

Continuing to follow all public health direction in place

These next few weeks continue to be critical for our community as cases continue to be high and our hospitals reach capacity. With the province-wide strengthened shutdown and stay-at-home order still in effect, please continue to follow all public health measures in place. Stay home and only go out for essentials reasons like going to work or school, grocery shopping,

medical appointments, outdoor exercise or getting your vaccine. Stick to your immediate household and avoid all gatherings. Regardless if you are partially or fully vaccinated, it's critical that we all continue to practice these important measures so we can reduce case counts and protect the health and safety of our community. To learn more about public health measures, visit [halton.ca/COVID19](https://www.halton.ca/COVID19).