Expanded booster doses help protect young Albertans

February 14, 2022

Young Albertans with immunocompromising conditions and underlying health conditions can book COVID-19 vaccine booster doses on February 15.

Youth between the ages of 12 and 17 with underlying health conditions and all First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth in this age group will be eligible to book a booster (third) dose. In addition, youth aged 12 to 17 with immunocompromising conditions will be eligible to book a booster (fourth) dose. All children aged five to 11 who have specific immunocompromising conditions will also be eligible to book a third dose as part of their primary series.

These changes follow recommendations from both the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and the Alberta Advisory Committee on Immunization (AACI).

“I know this will be welcome news to young Albertans who live with immunocompromising and other underlying health conditions, and to their parents and families. I encourage all parents and guardians to get their children immunized, whether or not they fall into these high-risk categories.”

Jason Copping, Minister of Health

“We want to provide these young Albertans with additional protection against the virus. It is important that all Albertans get immunized with all of the doses they are eligible for to help protect themselves and those around them.”

Dr. Deena Hinshaw, chief medical officer of health

Qualifying conditions

Eligible underlying health conditions for youth aged 12 to 17 include:

- A missing spleen or a spleen that is no longer working
- Sickle cell disease or thalassemia
- Chronic heart disease and vascular disease
- Chronic liver disease
- Chronic neurological disease
- Chronic respiratory diseases
- Diabetes requiring insulin or other anti-diabetic medication to control
- Pregnancy
- Severe mental illness or substance use disorder
- Severe obesity
- Severe or profound learning disabilities or severe developmental delay

In addition, First Nations, Métis and Inuit youth aged 12 to 17 year old are eligible for a third dose.

**When to book:** Bookings open February 15. Individuals must wait at least five months after the second dose.

Eligible immunocompromising conditions for all individuals five years of age and older:

- Recipients of chimeric antigen receptor (CAR)-T-cell therapy
- Moderate to severe primary immunodeficiency (for example, DiGeorge syndrome, Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome)
- Advanced untreated HIV infection or acquired immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS) or perinatally acquired HIV infection
- Immunosuppressive therapies (for example, anti-B cell therapies, high-dose systemic corticosteroids, alkylating agents, antimetabolites, or tumor-necrosis factor (TNF) inhibitors and other biologic agents)
- Transplant recipients, including solid organ and hematopoietic stem cell transplants
- Chronic kidney disease receiving regular dialysis
- Receiving active cancer treatment (chemotherapy, immunotherapy or targeted therapies), excluding those receiving only hormonal therapy, radiation therapy or surgery

**When to book:** Bookings open February 15.

- Third dose for children aged five to 11 with immunocompromising conditions - recommended to wait at least eight weeks after second dose.
- Fourth dose for adolescents 12-17 with immunocompromising conditions - must wait at least five months after the third dose.
Appointments for additional doses

Parents and guardians can book appointments for additional doses for eligible children and adolescents online with AHS and participating pharmacies by using the Alberta vaccine booking system or by calling 811.

Related information

- Alberta vaccine booking system
- COVID-19 vaccines and records

Media inquiries

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