

April 13, 2022

COVID-19 Vaccine and Storage Updates

This update contains information on the following:

1. **Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine Availability**
2. **12-17 years of age: COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Recommendation**
3. **18+ years of age: COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Recommendation**
4. **Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Storage Requirements**

1. Novavax COVID-19 Vaccine Availability

- Novavax (Nuvaxovid™) COVID-19 Vaccine, has arrived in Manitoba and is available for health care providers to order through your regular COVID-19 vaccine ordering process.
- Distributed Channel Partners that bring in Novavax (Nuvaxovid™) COVID-19 Vaccine are required to update their inventory availability for the Vaccine Finder Map through <https://forms.gov.mb.ca/update-covid-finder-map-info/>.
- Novavax (Nuvaxovid™) is approved for use in those 18 years of age and older. Two doses are recommended as a primary series with at least 8 weeks between doses. It is to be stored in a temperature-monitored refrigerator at 2-8°C and expires 6 hours after vial is punctured.
- Please see links below to resources, such as factsheets and product monographs, for more information about this product and its storage and handling requirements.
- The tariff for Novavax (Nuvaxovid™) COVID-19 Vaccine is 8291.

2. 12-17 years of age: COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Recommendation

- The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has released an updated recommendation on first booster doses of COVID-19 vaccines for those 12-17 years of age. Manitoba is adopting the recommendations.
- A first booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine **should** be offered at least 6 months after the completion of a primary series to adolescents 12 to 17 years of age who:
 - have an underlying medical condition that puts them at high risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19, including adolescents who are

immunocompromised and have already received an additional vaccine dose;

- are residents of congregate living settings;
- belong to racialized and/or marginalized communities disproportionately affected by COVID-19.
 - In order to apply the NACI recommendation, providers are encouraged to respectfully ask about the patient/ family's racial, ethnic or Indigenous identity.
 - For patients/families that identify as a member of a racialized community (for example Black, Indigenous, South Asian, Filipino, etc) the provider can explain that Manitoba's data has shown that members of diverse BIPOC communities are at higher risk for COVID-19 infection and severe outcomes at younger ages than other Manitobans.
 - Using this data as the foundation for the recommendation is important as it makes clear that there is a clinically important reason for asking about the patients' racial, ethnic or Indigenous identity.
- For all other adolescents 12 to 17 years of age:
 - A first booster dose of an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine **may** be offered at least 6 months after the completion of the primary series in the context of increased COVID-19 activity.

3. 18+ years of age: COVID-19 Vaccine Booster Recommendation

- NACI recommends that a first booster dose of an authorized COVID-19 vaccine should be offered ≥ 6 months after completion of a primary COVID-19 vaccine series to adults ≥ 18 years of age. An mRNA COVID-19 vaccine dose is preferred for the booster dose. (Strong NACI recommendation)

4. Pfizer and Moderna COVID-19 Vaccine Storage Requirements

- Most health care providers will receive their COVID-19 vaccine in the thawed state where they are to be stored in a temperature-monitored refrigerator at +2 to +8C.
- Once Pfizer (Comirnaty™) and Moderna (Spikevax™) COVID-19 vaccines are thawed and refrigerated they must be used within certain timelines, otherwise they need to be discarded. These timelines may be before the product's identified expiry date. The expiry date identified by the manufacturer on the packaging or online applies to product that has been stored at the frozen or ultra frozen state, according to the product monograph.
- Please review the product monographs for each product to confirm the storage and handling requirements and time lines for each product.

- All product that needs to be discarded should be removed from inventory and returned to the Provincial Distribution Warehouse for proper disposal.

Pfizer and Moderna Storage Requirements

| | Pfizer Adult/Adolescent vaccine (purple cap) | Pfizer Pediatric vaccine (orange cap) | Moderna vaccine |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age Indication | 12 years of age and over | 5-11 years | 6 years of age and over |
| Ultra Low Freezer Storage Time (-90C to -60C)[‡] | Until expiry date printed on vial (unless shelf life extensions are approved) | 9 months after manufacturing date printed on vial (unless shelf life extensions are approved) | Do not store at this temperature |
| Freezer Storage Time (-25C to -15C) | 2 weeks | Do not store at -25C to -15C | Until expiry date (unless shelf life extensions are approved) |
| Refrigerated Time (+2C to +8C)[^] | 1 month | 10 weeks | 30 days |
| Room Temperature Storage Time Prior to Dilution (+8 to +25°C) | 2 hours prior to dilution (including any thaw time) | 12 hours prior to dilution | Up to 24 hours. No dilution required |
| Time After Dilution or First Puncture (+2C to +25C) | Discard after 6 hours | Discard after 12 hours | Discard after 24 hours |
| [^] Length of time in refrigerator before discarding, unless the date of expiry occurs before that time. [‡] Expiry dates may be extended. Monitor for Health Canada announcements that may affect expiry dates. | | | |

You can also find Information about these products at:

- Pfizer: <https://www.cvdvaccine.ca/>
- Moderna: <https://modernacovid19global.com/ca/>

Please see links below to locate clinical and product information for the above updates:

- The Clinical Practice Guidelines: <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/healthcare-professionals.html>
- COVID-19 Factsheets for download at: <https://manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html#factsheets>
- Product Monographs: <https://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html>.
- National Advisory Committee on Immunization: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/national-advisory-committee-on-immunization-naci.html>
- Canadian Immunization Guide – COVID-19 Chapter: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/page-26-covid-19-vaccine.html>
- Immunization and Biologics Tariff Listing: https://www.gov.mb.ca/health/publichealth/surveillance/immunization/docs/mims_tariff_codes.pdf

Please share this information with all relevant colleagues in your facility/clinic.

On a personal note, this will be the last letter you receive from me as the Medical Lead for the Vaccine Implementation Taskforce. I want to thank all of you for such incredible work over the last 16 months. Manitoba has administered almost 3 million doses of COVID-19 vaccine and that could not have been done without your hard work, expertise, and the trust you have with your patients. I am so proud of the work you have done and I will forever be indebted to you all. Thank you!

Sincerely,

“Original signed by”

Joss Reimer, MD FRCPC MPH
Medical Lead, Vaccine Implementation Task Force