

Third doses of COVID-19 vaccine for moderately to severely immunocompromised Nova Scotians

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) strongly recommends that individuals who are greater than or equal to 5 years of age AND who are moderately to severely immunocompromised at the time of their first or second dose of their primary COVID-19 vaccine series receive a third primary series dose of age-appropriate mRNA COVID-19 vaccine. Third doses are recommended to be given at an interval of 56 days following the second dose. An interval of at least 28 days between dose two and three may be considered in the context of treatment for immunocompromise. Individuals 12 years of age or older who are moderately to severely immunocompromised are also eligible for a booster dose (i.e., a fourth dose) 168 days after their third primary series dose.

Individuals who become moderately to severely immunocompromised more than 14 days after completion of the two-dose COVID-19 primary series typically will not need a third primary series dose but should receive a booster dose 168 days following completion of the two-dose primary series if they are 12 years of age or older.

Moderate to severe immunocompromise includes individuals with the following conditions:

- Active systemic therapy for cancer (or have received systemic therapy in the past 12 months). This includes chemotherapy, immunotherapy and targeted agents¹. Excludes patients on hormonal agents² and those receiving only radiation therapy
- Receipt of solid-organ transplant and taking immunosuppressive medication
- Receipt of CAR-T therapy or stem cell transplant within 2 years or stem cell transplant and taking immunosuppressive medication
- Moderate to severe primary immunodeficiency* with associated humoral and/or cell-mediated immunodeficiency or immune dysregulation [More information regarding primary immunodeficiency may be found below*]
- HIV and a CD4 count less than 200 OR CD4 fraction \leq 15% (individuals 6 years of age and older); HIV and a CD4 count less than 500 OR CD4 fraction \leq 22% (individuals 5 years to less than 6 years of age)
- Active treatment with the following categories of immunosuppressive therapies: anti-B cell therapies (i.e. rituximab/Rituxan®, ocrelizumab/Ocrevus®), high-dose steroids, alkylating agents (i.e. cyclophosphamide), antimetabolites (i.e. azathioprine, methotrexate), tumor-necrosis factor (TNF) inhibitors (i.e. infliximab/Remicade®, adalimumab/Humira®) and other biologic agents that are significantly immunosuppressive (i.e. ustekinumab/Stelara®, secukinumab/Cosentyx®)

¹ Patients may provide information to confirm active systemic therapy for cancer when possible, but therapies DO NOT need to be on the medication list for a patient to be eligible, as it is not an exhaustive list of systemic cancer therapies.

² Hormonal agents excluded are: antiestrogens (tamoxifen, fulvestrant), aromatase inhibitors (anastrozole, exemestane, letrozole), gonadotropin releasing hormone analogues (buserelin, goserelin, leuprolide), luteinizing hormone releasing hormone antagonists (degarelix), progestins (medroxyprogesterone, megestrol), antiandrogens (apalutamide, bicalutamide, darolutamide, enzalutamide, flutamide, nilutamide), androgen biosynthesis inhibitors (abiraterone), androgens (testosterone), somatostatin analogues (lanreotide, octreotide), thyrotropin stimulating hormone agonists (thyrotropin alpha), prolactin lowering agents (bromocriptine, cabergoline, quinagolide)

NOVEL CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19)

novascotia.ca/coronavirus



A full list of eligible medications here is found here:

<https://novascotia.ca/dhw/cdpc/documents/immunosuppressive-medication-list.pdf>

*Primary Immunodeficiency: Eligibility for a third dose of COVID-19 Vaccine in Nova Scotia

NACI recommends that people with moderate to severe primary immunodeficiency receive a third dose of COVID-19 vaccine to optimize protection. Most primary immunodeficiency conditions are quite rare. A full list of primary immunodeficiencies can be found on the [Immunodeficiency Canada website](#).

Not all primary immunodeficiencies cause immunosuppression severe enough to predictably reduce vaccine effectiveness of a standard two dose series of COVID-19 vaccines.

People with the following primary immunodeficiencies are not eligible for a third dose:

- Glycogen Storage Disease
- Goodpasture Syndrome
- Hereditary angioedema
- Hyper-IgD Syndrome
- Immunodysregulation, Polyendocrinopathy and Enteropathy, X-linked
- Mannose Binding Lectin Deficiency
- Selective IgA deficiency
- Selective IgM deficiency
- Transient Hypogammaglobulinemia of Infancy
- Unspecified Hypogammaglobulinemia in people over 16 years of age (children 5 to 16 years of age with unspecified hypogammaglobulinemia are eligible for a third dose)