

November 10, 2021

## **COVID-19 Vaccine Update: Expanded Third/Booster Dose 6 Months After Dose 2 Guidance**

**Effective November 10, 2021, a booster/third dose of Pfizer/Comirnaty™ or Moderna/Spikevax™ is recommended for people ≥ 18 years of age at increased risk of serious illness from COVID-19, their caregivers and close/household contacts at least 6 months after dose 2. This includes:**

- people aged 70 years and older
- residents of personal care homes or congregate elderly person housing sites (e.g., assisted living)
- individuals with the following chronic health conditions:
  - an immune system moderately to severely weakened by disease or medical treatment ([manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/eligibility-criteria.html#immunocompromised](https://manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/eligibility-criteria.html#immunocompromised))
  - cardiac or pulmonary disorders (ex: cystic fibrosis)
  - neurologic or neurodevelopmental conditions
  - diabetes and other metabolic diseases
  - renal or liver disease
  - anemia or hemoglobinopathy
  - asplenia or hyposplenism (including sickle cell disease)
  - obesity (body mass index ≥ 40)
  - tuberculosis disease (current or previous) OR latent tuberculosis (LTBI) where treatment has not been completed
  - human immunodeficiency virus (HIV), irrespective of CD4 count
- pregnant individuals
- health care personnel who have direct contact with patients, residents or clients
- First Nation, Métis and Inuit people
- individuals living north of the 53<sup>rd</sup> parallel of latitude or in a remote/isolated community
- individuals living or working in a congregate living facility (e.g., correctional facilities, group homes, homeless shelters)
- individuals experiencing homelessness
- individuals receiving homecare OR receiving any level of Community Living Disability Service support (or, as per family physician determination of equivalent levels of family support)

- individuals who have only received:
  - a viral vector vaccine (e.g., AstraZeneca/Vaxzevria™ or Janssen); OR
  - one or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine that is not approved by Health Canada\*
- or as recommended by a health care provider

*\* NOTE: people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised OR who have received one or two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine not approved by Health Canada, do not need to wait 6 months to receive a third dose (as is recommended for all other people); these individuals can receive a booster/third dose ≥ 28 days after their last dose.*

**All individuals ≥ 18 years of age who are fully vaccinated against COVID-19 and are not included in the above list can further reduce their individual risk by getting a booster/third dose of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer/Comirnaty™ or Moderna/Spikevax™) at least six months after their last COVID-19 vaccine.**

In making the decision to proceed with a third/booster dose, clients should be counselled on the individual risks and benefits during the informed consent process, taking into consideration the following:

- risk of severe illness and death;
- risk of exposure;
- risk of declining protection from the vaccine, particularly when:
  - a shorter interval between dose one and two was used, &/OR
  - a longer time has elapsed since completion of the primary series.
- risk as it pertains to vaccine safety, particularly around myocarditis/pericarditis; and,
- use in Canada and worldwide, noting that Health Canada has approved the use of the third dose for Pfizer/Comirnaty™ only at this time. Health Canada is currently reviewing the booster dose submission for Moderna/Spikevax™.

**The Clinical Practice Guidelines** will be updated to reflect these changes and posted at [www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/healthcare-professionals.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/healthcare-professionals.html), specifically pages 35 to 39 will include guidance on counselling individuals about the risks/benefits of a third/booster dose.

At this time, a third/booster dose does **NOT** impact an individual's ability to successfully apply for a Manitoba Immunization Card or the Pan-Canadian Proof of Vaccination Credential (PVC). More information is available at: [manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/immunizationrecord/residents.html](http://manitoba.ca/covid19/vaccine/immunizationrecord/residents.html).

### **Recommended interval**

Principles of immunology indicate that a longer interval between priming and booster doses of a vaccine results in a better and more durable response. Most studies on mRNA COVID-19 vaccine booster doses have used an interval of ≥ 6 months following the completion of the primary series, and submissions filed with regulatory authorities in the US, the European Union and Canada are for ≥ 6 months following the second dose, which was the interval used in booster dose trials for Pfizer/Comirnaty™ and Moderna/Spikevax™. **Unless explicitly indicated (as per the above note), third/booster doses are recommended to be given at**

**least 6 months after the last COVID-19 vaccine dose (regardless of which vaccine products were used for previous dose(s)).**

### **Public communications**

The mRNA vaccine factsheet is being updated to reflect the above guidance and will be available at [www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html](http://www.gov.mb.ca/covid19/vaccine/resources.html) in the coming days.

### **Moderna/Spikevax™ dosing for third/booster doses** *(as communicated in the memos dated November 3<sup>rd</sup> and November 5<sup>th</sup>)*

Where Moderna/Spikevax™ is provided for the third/booster dose, Manitoba adopted the following NACI recommendation as it pertains to dosage:

- For adults aged ≤ 69 years who are living in community: **use a half dose (50 mcg; 0.25ml)** of Moderna/Spikevax™ for third/booster doses.
- For adults aged ≥ 70 years who are living in community: **use a full dose (100 mcg; 0.5ml)** of Moderna/Spikevax™ for third/booster doses.
- For adults of any age who are living in a personal care home or congregate elderly persons housing site: **use a full dose (100 mcg; 0.5ml)** of Moderna/Spikevax™ for third/booster doses.
- For adults of any age who are moderately to severely immunocompromised: **use a full dose (100 mcg; 0.5ml)** of Moderna/Spikevax™ for third/booster doses.

**There is no change to the Pfizer/Comirnaty™ third/booster dosage and, the full Moderna/Spikevax™ dosage (100 mcg; 0.5ml) is to be used for the primary series (dose 1 and dose 2).**

When using the Moderna/Spikevax™ vaccine for third/booster doses, the maximum number of vial punctures permitted is 20. **After 20 punctures, the vial should be discarded.**

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

Sincerely,

*“Original signed by”*

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