

## **Ontario to allow COVID-19 vaccine booster shots to seniors 70+, AstraZeneca recipients among others**

Eligibility is being expanded to people 70 and older, health-care workers and essential caregivers in congregate settings, people who received a full round of vaccination of a viral vector vaccine (two doses of **AstraZeneca**), and First Nations people and their non-Indigenous household members.

These groups must have had their last shot at least six to eight months prior. Eligible groups can start booking a booster dose on Saturday, Nov. 6. at 8 a.m.

Bookings can be made on the provincial portal, by phone, through local public health units that use their own booking systems, or at select pharmacies and hospital workers are encouraged to reach out to their employer.

In addition, for those seeking a booster dose of **Moderna**, it is recommended that those aged 70 and older receive the full 100-microgram dosage and only 50 micrograms for anyone under the age of 70 in order to provide a robust immune response.

Ontario said offering booster shots to these specific groups would be in line with six months after the second dose due to waning immunity seen over time.

NACI has not yet recommended booster shots to general population but provincial officials said Ontario is looking at a broad timeline after January 2022 (around six months after a second dose) if those shots do become recommended based on vaccine effectiveness. Two doses of a COVID-19 vaccine is enough protection against the virus and the third booster dose is strongly recommended ahead of the cold and flu season, not a requirement, and it does not impact the vaccine certificate program that has been implemented.

There is nothing noted on the Simcoe Muskoka Health Website as yet or the Ontario Portal as this is breaking news as of 1:00 p.m. today. When we find out more, we will notify you.

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