

# SCHOOL AND COMMUNITY COVID-19 VACCINATION CLINICS FOR YORK REGION CHILDREN AGES FIVE TO 11 AND ELIGIBLE FAMILY MEMBERS

Wednesday, November 24, 2021

Dear Parent/Guardian,

On Friday, November 19, 2021, [Health Canada authorized the Pfizer-BioNTech \(Comirnaty\) COVID-19 vaccine](#) for use in children ages five to 11. In preparation for this announcement, York Region Public Health has been working diligently with our school board partners to launch school-based vaccination clinics in convenient locations across the Region.

We are pleased to invite children aged five (or turning five in 2021) to 11 and their eligible family members to book an appointment for their first dose, second or third dose of the Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) COVID-19 vaccine. Appointments must be made for children aged five (or turning five in 2021) to 11. Bookings opened Tuesday, November 23, 2021 at 8 a.m. at [york.ca/COVID19Vaccine](http://york.ca/COVID19Vaccine).

## SCHOOL-BASED CLINICS

School clinics were chosen based on a needs-based data analysis including COVID-19 vaccination and infection rates and location availability. York Region Public Health has identified 13 schools for the initial rollout of the school-based clinics with additional locations may be added as the rollout is expanded.

The school-based clinics will operate on a rotating schedule. Please visit [york.ca/COVID19Vaccine](http://york.ca/COVID19Vaccine) for current operating times and locations.

Both the adolescent/adult and paediatric Pfizer-BioNTech (Comirnaty) vaccines will be available at these clinics.

## COMMUNITY CLINICS

Community clinics and pop-up clinics are also available for children aged five to 11 to receive the vaccine at other locations in York Region.

## HOW TO BOOK AN APPOINTMENT

**Vaccination for children aged five to 11 are by appointment only.**

To book an appointment, see a full list of clinics currently operating and available at [york.ca/COVID19Vaccine](http://york.ca/COVID19Vaccine) or call Access York at 1-877-464-9675.

### PUBLIC HEALTH

1-877-464-9675  
TTY 1-866-512-6228  
[york.ca/COVID19Vaccine](http://york.ca/COVID19Vaccine)



**Important:** Available appointments will be booked 10 days in advance and clinic locations and dates are subject to change. It is important to check [york.ca/COVID19Vaccine](http://york.ca/COVID19Vaccine) to confirm your appointment time and location prior to attending the clinic.

## PARENTAL CONSENT

Children aged five to 11 will require [parental consent](#), while children born in 2009 and earlier can provide consent for themselves. Please note, **children aged five to 11 will NOT be vaccinated without a parent or legal guardian present or without a signed consent form.**

[Consent forms](#) are available for parents of legal guardians to complete if they are unable to attend the clinic with their child.

## GETTING THE FLU SHOT OR OTHER VACCINES

At this time, the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends children receive the paediatric Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine **at least 14 days before or after another vaccine including the flu shot.** This precaution will help determine if a side effect that may arise is from the COVID-19 vaccine or another vaccine. There may be circumstances when a dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and another vaccine need to be given at the same time; your healthcare provider can help with this decision.

Please note, there will be an **eight-week interval between first and second doses of COVID-19 vaccines for children aged five (or turning five in 2021) to 11.** Emerging evidence in adults suggests longer intervals between the first and second doses result in a strong immune response and higher vaccine effectiveness that is expected to last longer.

## PREPARING FOR YOUR VISIT

In advance of you or your child's vaccine appointment, please visit [preparing for your COVID-19 vaccine.](#)

Every effort is being made to reduce anxiety and vaccine-related fears for children, including:

- Additional dividers between immunization stations
- Longer appointment times
- Child-friendly incentives such as stickers will be offered at the clinics

Please remember to bring the following to the clinic:

- Ontario Health Card (OHIP) if you have one, or have it available
- A face mask or covering
- Proof of age
- Completed consent form, if required
- A comforting toy, or a phone/game to offer a form of distraction for children

For added comfort, parents and caregivers may also choose to use numbing cream or patches prior to attending the clinic. These are available at most pharmacies as an over-the-counter purchase and a pharmacist can explain how to use them prior to vaccination.

For children with needle phobias and tips on how to improve your child's vaccination experience, you can learn more about the [CARD system from Immunize Canada.](#) More information on how to prepare for your

appointment and videos of what to expect at the clinic are also available at [york.ca/COVID19VaccineBeforeYouGo](http://york.ca/COVID19VaccineBeforeYouGo)

## WHY GET VACCINATED?

COVID-19 infection can have serious consequences for all age groups, including children, particularly given the circulation of new variants of concern. We encourage all residents who are eligible to get a vaccine, but we understand parents, caregivers and children may have questions.

If you have questions about the COVID-19 vaccine and your child, SickKids has a [COVID-19 Vaccine Consult Service](#). This service provides a safe, judgement-free space to have an open conversation about the COVID-19 vaccine for children and youth. It is available in multiple languages using over-the-phone language interpretation. Parents and caregivers can also speak to a York Region Public Health Nurse by calling York Region Health Connection at 1-800-361-5653 or speak to your family health care provider.

We encourage you to have discussions with your children about the COVID-19 vaccine. You and your child can visit [Max the Vax](#) for child and family friendly resources and to learn more about the vaccines together.

Vaccinating all residents who are eligible, including children, will help to reduce the number of cases of COVID-19 in our community and allow everyone to get back to the activities they enjoy. Thank you for your ongoing commitment to stop the spread of COVID-19.

For more information, please visit [york.ca/COVID19vaccineinfo](http://york.ca/COVID19vaccineinfo).