

Media Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

June 20, 2021



Thunder Bay District
Health Unit

Increased eligibility for accelerated second doses of COVID-19 vaccine and Interchangeability of Pfizer and Moderna vaccines

On Thursday June 17, 2021, the Province announced the [accelerated rollout of second dose eligibility](#) for COVID-19 vaccines.

As of the morning of Monday June 21, individuals who received their first dose of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) **on or before May 9th** are eligible to book an appointment for a second dose.

The Thunder Bay District Health Unit and the Thunder Bay Regional Health Sciences Centre have opened up additional appointments for the coming days and weeks to accommodate this expanded eligibility. At this time, no appointments are available through the provincial booking system.

Eligible individuals can make an appointment starting Monday morning through the following links. These links will be active at 10 am.

- Appointments at the CLE Coliseum in Thunder Bay can be booked through the [TBDHU website](#).
- Appointments at the TBRHSC Bora Laskin Building can be booked through the [TBRHSC Bora Laskin Clinic Website](#).

Other individuals who are also eligible to book appointments include:

- Individuals who are 12 years and older can receive a first dose. Note that individuals 12 to 17 years old should select a clinic where the Pfizer vaccine is given.
- Individuals who have received the AstraZeneca vaccine as their first dose can book a second dose appointment, provided their second dose appointment date is at least 8 weeks from the date of their first dose.
- Individuals who are 70 years of age and older can receive a second dose mRNA vaccine, provided their second dose appointment is at least 28 days following their first dose appointment.

Individuals who are unable to book online can call the TBDHU at (807) 625-5900.

In addition to COVID-19 immunization clinics, individuals can arrange for appointments at [select pharmacies](#) in the TBDHU area.

Interchangeability of mRNA vaccines (Pfizer and Moderna):

Individuals now have more flexibility to receive different mRNA vaccines for their first and second doses. This will support individuals in getting fully immunized more quickly and conveniently by giving them more options. This will also help offset issues related to vaccine supply and delivery.

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and Ontario Ministry of Health have recently confirmed that a mixed vaccine schedule for the COVID-19 vaccine is safe, effective, and will complete the vaccine series. This means that individuals who received a first dose of an mRNA vaccine (Pfizer or Moderna) can receive a different mRNA vaccine for their second dose. The option of mixing of vaccines for individuals to complete the two dose series is reasonable given the similarity of these vaccines in their mechanism of action, side effect profile and high effectiveness against COVID-19 and its variants, including the Delta variant. At this time, the mixed schedule does not apply to youth 12 to 17 years for whom only Pfizer is approved.

Individuals are encouraged to get their second dose as soon as they are able, and to get the vaccine available at the clinic most convenient for them, regardless of which mRNA vaccine that it is offered at that clinic. TBDHU will provide information on what vaccine is available at clinics, however, vaccine availability may change depending on vaccine supply and delivery schedules.

Continue to follow the [TBDHU website](#) and social media channels for more information and announcements on the COVID-19 vaccine roll-out. TBDHU continues to work with partners to open up clinic spots for individuals to get first and second doses as supply permits.

In the District communities, the local Family Health Teams continue to deliver vaccine clinics, using the expanded criteria. For individuals in the District, please visit the [TBDHU website](#) for additional information and links to the Family Health Teams.

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For more information - Health Unit Media: news@tbdhu.com.