

Immunization Update (Part 3): Influenza, COVID-19, Pneumococcal, RSV

Dear Physicians & Nurse Practitioners,

You play an important role in encouraging your patients/clients (especially those at high risk of disease) to get vaccinated. This year's respiratory immunization program includes influenza, COVID-19, pneumococcal, and RSV vaccines.

How do people get their seasonal vaccines?

Your patients/clients do not have to book through the provincial system if they can receive vaccines through your practice. Otherwise, invitations will start being sent from the provincial 'Get Vaccinated' system the week of October 7th, to priority populations in descending order. Individuals can register to get invited [online or by phone](#) (including help in 140+ languages).

Where?

Community Pharmacies	Age >= 4 years old for influenza, Age >= 12 years old for COVID-19
Local public health units	Age <19 years old in most communities
Island Health clinics or First Nations health centres	Anyone invited
Long-term care facilities and hospitals	Anyone inpatient

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Influenza

Who?

Eligibility for influenza vaccination this year is anyone with a medical condition that puts them at increased risk from influenza, everyone who is capable of transmitting influenza to someone at increased risk, and everyone who interacts with influenza-susceptible animals (e.g., poultry, swine, cattle)

Which influenza vaccine?

Inactivated vaccine	Anyone > 6 months of age
Live attenuated intranasal spray	2-17 years of age, if available
Adjuvanted or high dose inactivated vaccine	> 65 years of age

Reminder: People with severe egg allergy (including anaphylaxis) can be offered any influenza vaccine.



For more detailed information, please see [BCCDC Vaccines & Immune Globulins Part 4: Biological Products \(Vaccines & Immune Globulins\)](#) and scroll down to 'Influenza vaccines'.

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COVID-19

This season, at least one updated COVID-19 vaccine is **recommended for those 6 months of age and older at increased risk of COVID-19 infection or severe disease**. All other previously vaccinated and unvaccinated individuals 6 months of age and older who wish to receive a COVID-19 LP.8.1 vaccine can receive them.

For more detailed information, please see [BCCDC Vaccines & Immune Globulins Part 4: Biological Products \(Vaccines & Immune Globulins\)](#) and scroll down to 'Covid-19 vaccines'.

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Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) vaccine

RSV immunization is publicly funded in BC for **some infants and pregnant individuals who are Indigenous**.

RSV vaccine is not publicly funded in BC but is recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) for individuals ≥ 60 years old who are residents of long term care or other chronic care facilities, and those aged ≥ 75 years, particularly those that are at increased risk of severe RSV disease. This vaccine can be purchased (~\$300) at some pharmacies and travel clinics. At the present time, NACI does not recommend an immunization program for RSV for pregnant people.

[See Immunization Update Part 2](#)

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Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (Pevnar20/PCV20)

Pevnar20 (PCV20) has replaced Pevnar 13 (PCV13) and Pneumovax23 (PPV23) effective 1 July, 2025. **Pevnar20/PCV20 is recommended and publicly funded for adults aged ≥ 65 years in BC, and those who are particularly susceptible to exposure and/or severe disease.**

[See Immunization Update Part 1](#)

[PCV20 Q&A](#)

Participating as a community vaccine provider (for influenza and COVID-19 vaccines):

- Influenza vaccine inventory has started to arrive and will be ready for distribution to primary care providers, long- term care facilities, and assisted living facilities, in early October. You can start vaccinating as soon as you have vaccine, but please do not book appointments until you are notified of vaccine availability.
- Please refer to [Vaccine Information for Community Vaccine Providers](#) for instructions on vaccine ordering, storing, handling, administration, and documentation.
- There are unique aspects of COVID-19 vaccines to consider, including a short shelf-life after first vial puncture and a requirement for all doses to be documented in the Provincial Vaccination Registry (ie: ImmsBC or [eForms](#)).
- Public health will receive shipments of vaccine throughout the season. For your first order, request only the quantity you anticipate needing for the first two weeks based on booked appointments. Subsequent orders can be placed as needed.
- Vaccines need to be picked up at your [local public health unit](#).

If there are outstanding questions after reviewing the above, please contact your [local public health unit](#):

Campbell River Health Unit	250-850-2110	Port Alberni Health Unit	250-731-1315
Comox Valley Health Unit	250-331-8520	Port Alice Health Unit	250-284-3555
Duncan Health Unit	250-709-3050	Port Hardy Health Unit	250-902-6071
Esquimalt Health Unit	250-519-5311	Port McNeill Health Unit	250-956-4711
Ladysmith Health Unit	250-755-3342	Saanich Health Unit	250-519-5100
Lake Cowichan Health Unit	250-749-6878	Salt Spring Island Health Unit	250-538-4880
Nanaimo Public Health Unit	250-755-3342	Tofino and Ucluelet Public Health Unit	250-725-4020
Parksville Family Place	250-947-8242	Victoria Health Unit	250-388-2200
Peninsula Health Unit	250-544-2400	West Shore Health Unit	250-519-3490

Island Health Medical Health Officers

Chief MHO: Dr. Réka Gustafson 250-519-3406; North Island & Alberni/Clayoquot: Dr. Charmaine Enns 250-331-8591

Nanaimo/Oceanside: Dr. Tribesty Nguyen 250-739-6304; Cowichan Region: Dr. Melissa Wan (interim) 250-737-2020

South Island: Dr. Carol Fenton, Dr. Christina Kay, Dr. Mark Cachia, Dr. Melissa Wan, Dr. Mike Benusic 250-519-3406