



Message from Dr. Verna Yiu & Dr. Laura McDougall

Launch of Phase 2B

To all staff, physicians and volunteers,

As announced by Alberta Health this morning, the next group of eligible Albertans will be able to start booking COVID-19 immunizations through participating pharmacies on March 30 as part of phase 2B. By the end of phase 2B, all Albertans born in 2005 or earlier (ages 16 and up) with any one of a list of eligible underlying health conditions will have the opportunity to receive the vaccine.

Booking through a participating pharmacy begins March 30

Pharmacies across Alberta are offering immunizations to all Albertans born in or before 1963 with underlying health conditions. Eligible individuals wanting to book their appointment through a participating pharmacy can book directly through the pharmacy of their choice, which can be found on the Alberta Blue Cross website: [COVID-19 Immunization Program | Alberta Blue Cross](#)

Additional pharmacies will offer bookings starting the week of April 5, as more doses arrive. Albertans are asked to not call pharmacies that are not on the Alberta Blue Cross list, as they will not have any appointments available. Please only call pharmacies if you are eligible to book an appointment.

Booking through Alberta Health Services begins April 5

AHS is offering appointments in a staged approach and will start with those born in or before 1959 with underlying health conditions. All eligible Albertans wanting to book their appointment through AHS can do so through the online booking tool or by calling Health Link at 811.

Additional birth years in phase 2B will become eligible as more vaccine arrives.

During this phase of the vaccine roll out, Alberta will operate on the honour system. A doctor's note or other proof of an underlying condition is not required. Individuals who are pregnant, immunocompromised or with an autoimmune disorder are encouraged to consult their healthcare provider prior to booking their appointment if they have any questions.

Health conditions included in phase 2B

In phase 2B, Albertans born in 2005 or earlier (ages 16 and up) with the following underlying conditions are included in this phase:

- A missing spleen or a spleen that is no longer working
- Cancer
- Chronic heart disease and vascular disease
- Chronic kidney diseases requiring regular medical monitoring or treatment
- Chronic liver disease due to any cause
- Chronic neurological disease
- Chronic respiratory (lung) diseases
- Diabetes requiring insulin or other anti-diabetic medication to control
- A weakened immune response due to disease or treatment
- Anyone is who is currently pregnant
- Severe mental illness or substance use disorder requiring a hospital stay during the past year
- Severe obesity which includes a Body Mass Index (BMI) of 40kg/m² or more
- Severe or profound learning disabilities or severe developmental delay
- Solid organ, bone marrow or stem cell transplant recipients

A full list of associated underlying health conditions is available at alberta.ca/covid.

The conditions included in phase 2B were recommended by the Alberta Advisory Committee on Immunization and were chosen by Alberta Health as they are associated with a higher risk of death or hospitalization.

Phase 2B is the largest eligible group to date and includes an estimated 945,000 eligible people. We anticipate calls to Health Link to increase with this cohort and have ensured staffing is on hand to assist all Albertans seeking advice.

Updates to online booking tool

In conjunction with the launch of phase 2B, Alberta Health Services has made enhancements to the online booking tool to allow other eligible family members to book vaccines at the same time.

Starting on April 5, the tool will provide options for eligible Albertans to book

appointments at the same time, and at the same clinic for up to three additional family members. Family members will need to indicate eligibility as well as demographic information when booking their vaccine appointment.

Providing COVID-19 vaccine to homebound Albertans

Starting today, March 29, Alberta Health Services will begin providing COVID-19 vaccines to an estimated 3,000 homebound Albertans eligible in phase 1 and 2A. The program will expand to individuals in phase 2B in the coming days and to other groups as they become eligible in upcoming phases of the provincial vaccination program.

Homebound is defined as anyone who is physically unable to leave their home, including for medical and personal appointments. This population is considered vulnerable and requires immunization to be provided in their homes.

Similar to how the annual influenza vaccine is provided to homebound individuals, the COVID-19 vaccine will be administered by AHS Public Health teams or Home Care, depending on the AHS Zone.

Eligible Home Care clients will be contacted directly by AHS to arrange immunization. We encourage Home Care clients to speak with their case manager directly if they have questions about their eligibility.

For Albertans who think they may be eligible to receive the COVID-19 vaccine at home but are not a Home Care client, we encourage them to contact Health Link at 811. Health Link staff will do an initial screening to check eligibility. The zone teams will then follow up to do a second eligibility check and book their COVID-19 immunization if appropriate.

Eligible homebound individuals will be provided with either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna vaccine with a second dose of the same vaccine offered within four months. Zone Public Health or Home Care will arrange second dose appointments. The vaccine will be administered using pre-drawn/single syringes to reduce vaccine waste, in accordance with [AHS' Vaccine Waste Mitigation Strategy](#).

Only homebound individuals are eligible to be vaccinated through this program, at this time. Caregivers, spouses, other household and family members are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as they are eligible, either at a [participating pharmacy](#) or AHS immunization site.

This will ensure homebound individuals, a vulnerable population who are at risk of severe outcomes from COVID-19, are vaccinated as quickly as possible, with the resources and vaccine supply available.

Thank you

Thank you to all eligible Albertans that have received their COVID-19 vaccines or booked their immunization appointment. We will continue to work to ensure all Albertans who want a vaccine will get their first dose by the end of June. For more information, please refer to alberta.ca/covid and [AHS' COVID-19 Vaccine FAQ](#).

Thank you for your perseverance, dedication and commitment to Albertans as we continue in our COVID-19 journey together.

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