

FAQ Flu vaccines distribution – Fall 2024

1. What is the overall strategy for flu vaccination 2024?

A: The provincial influenza vaccination campaign is set to start in October. Influenza vaccine will be offered to BC residents at community COVID-19 booster clinics, pharmacies, as well as physician and nurse practitioner offices.

2. Is a free vaccine available to everyone this year?

A: Yes. The Influenza vaccine is recommended and provided free for all BC residents ≥ 6 months of age. In particular, the influenza vaccine should be offered to individuals at high risk of influenza complications (children 6-59 months, seniors, pregnant women, people 5-64 years with underlying chronic health conditions), those in contact with people at high risk including visitors to health care facilities, people who provide essential community service providers, and anyone else who wishes to reduce their risk of influenza.

3. Will there be enough flu vaccine this year?

A: There will be enough supply in BC for all residents who want to be immunized. Similar to last year, participating offices will receive a start-up supply. As VCH expects several vaccine deliveries, clinics will be able to re-order modest amounts.

4. Is it possible to have the vaccine delivered to my clinic?

A: Yes. The North Shore Division has once again partnered with MTS Logistics to offer eligible primary care clinics FREE vaccination delivery direct to clinic during October 2024 to March 2025. This Division-funded support allows delivery of vaccinations in a safe and timely manner from your designated CHC vaccination depot directly to your clinic.

This year eligible clinics can have their initial allocation and re-orders delivered by MTS. If your clinic is ineligible to receive complimentary vaccine delivery through the NSDoFP, Influenza vaccines can still be ordered and picked up directly from your local CHC free of charge – or you can set up an account with MTS to facilitate vaccine deliveries to your clinic. Your local CHC will be able to assist with your order, while MTS Logistics can provide with paid delivery

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Your clinic should have received a communication from VCH about initial vaccine allocations and the option for delivery of your initial allocation. If you have not received VCH communication or haven't replied, please email nsbiologicals@vch.ca

5. Our clinic requested delivery of our initial allocation. What happens next?

A: VCH will contact the clinic to discuss what day/time is best for vaccine delivery. This information will be passed on to MTS. During the week of October 14th MTS will begin delivery as VCH packages the vaccine allocation.

6. Our clinic wants to pick up our initial allocation. What's the process?

A: VCH will contact your clinic to advise which date you can pick up at your usual local health unit.

7. Who is allowed to pick up vaccine?

A: VCH allows anyone associated with the clinic to pick up vaccine. It does NOT have to be a physician. Everyone is expected to transport the vaccine in a way that supports the cold chain.

8. How should I transport the vaccine?

A: This is unchanged from prior years. Best practice requires a cooler, cold water blankets and ice packs. Keep in mind that pre-filled syringe format products require much more space than multidose vials for transport & storage.

9. What vaccines will I receive?

A: Vaccines available this year include Fluzone Quadrivalent, Flumist and Fluad. You will likely be offered some of each product. Flumist is a popular product, and we are not likely to have enough for all providers.

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10. What impacts which vaccines VCH receives and when? Does VCH withhold vaccine distribution?

A: The supply chain for flu vaccines involves manufacturing and then transport between several organizations. Flu vaccine is delivered from the different manufacturers on different dates to the BCCDC (the provincial depot), and from there it is distributed to the Health Authorities.

VCH distributes all of the vaccine it receives as quickly as it can once it is received centrally from the BCCDC.

11. When can I schedule high-volume vaccination clinics for my patients?

A: We recommend that you schedule your high-volume clinics based on vaccine distributed to your office in early October. You may be able to book additional high-volume clinics in late October; please wait for supply updates and let us know how much vaccine you may need for those late clinics (based on appointment bookings). Please email mencinas@nsdivision.ca

12. Can I get less vaccine than prior years? I won't be immunizing as many patients this year

A: Yes. You only need to request the amount of vaccine that you realistically expect to use this year. Vaccine not used in your office is not available to other locations. We really appreciate you taking a realistic assessment of vaccine utilization in your office and supporting placement of orders accordingly.

13. Is the recommended wait time post-injection still 15 minutes?

A: VCH Public Health and the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) still recommend a 15-minute post-injection observation period.

A shorter observation period between 5-15 minutes may be considered if the conditions below are met:

- Client has received influenza vaccine before and did not have a severe reaction;
- No history of immediate post-vaccination reactions following any vaccines (e.g., syncope);
- There's another adult who can monitor the vaccine recipient for 15 minutes;
- The vaccine recipient is not operating a motorized or another wheeled transportation device for a min of 15 minutes (so they can wait in the parking lot for the total 15 minutes);
- The vaccine recipient/responsible adult knows when to seek post vaccination advice/medical

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assistance;

- The client agrees to wait in the post-vaccination waiting area for the reduced observation period

14. Should I wait until the 'right' vaccine is available before vaccinating patients?

A: As in prior years, the recommendation is to not defer and use the best option you have on hand to vaccinate patients rather than waiting until other types are available.

15. What proportion of injection vs inhalable vaccines will I receive?

A: The initial proportions will be based on your 2023 usage.

16. How do I request more vaccine?

A: This process remains the same as prior years. You can email (preferred) or fax your local CHC that normally supplies your biologicals. The CHC will contact your clinic by email once the order is filled. VCH is targeting to have your order ready for pickup within 1-2 business days. If you want your re-orders delivered via MTS courier, please cc vaccine@mtslogistics.com

17. How can my patients access vaccination clinics?

A: Your patients can find appointments using the BC flu on the Immunize BC website: <https://immunizebc.ca/>

18. Will BC Children's Hospital Family Immunization Clinic operate this year?

A: Yes. According to VCH, BCCH will operate its immunization clinic.

Will unused vaccines need to be returned to VCH?

A: Yes, as in previous years, unused vaccines will need to be returned to VCH. In April 2024, the North Shore Division will offer via MTS complimentary pick up of unused vaccines. You will receive email communication about this year's returns program.

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19: What are the mandatory immunization reporting requirements for Flu vaccines & GP offices participating in the COVID pilot?

A: For Adults only COVID19 immunizations are required to be recorded via eforms. GPs need to report any school aged children (clients under 19yo) to their local community health centre. This is standard practice, and offices can obtain this school aged reporting form from their local VCH CHC. For assistance or additional questions regarding reporting requirements please contact [X]

COVID 19

1. Where do I get access to the COVID19 toolkit

A: Please email CDCVaccines@vch.ca who can support with questions regarding ordering, cold chain management, documentation and clinical resources.

2. How do I get authorization to access the immunization e-forms?

A: Please refer to the “Primary Care Provider (PCP) eForm” PowerPoint to set up and get access to the e-forms. For troubleshooting access to e-forms please email eFormsEnrolment@phsa.ca and inquire about COVID eForms.