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Covid-19 Updates - December 31, 2021

December 31, 2021

Written by Ernie



Omicron in BC: What you need to know

-  Omicron is highly contagious. It has overtaken Delta as the most common variant in BC.
-  You can pass on Omicron to others before you know you're infected. Don't take the risk — stay home if you're sick.
-  Omicron spreads fastest in unvaccinated people. It can infect people who are vaccinated or who had COVID-19.
-  Omicron could overwhelm our health care system and prevent people from getting the care they need.

COVID-19 IN BC

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Get Your Booster Dose

A booster dose is an additional shot of vaccine that helps you maintain and lengthen your protection against COVID-19. When you get a booster dose, you're helping protect you and the people around you from COVID-19. [Read information from the BCCDC about the booster dose.](#)

Your booster dose **does not** affect your [proof of vaccination status](#). You're considered fully vaccinated with 2 doses of vaccine.

All booster doses will be mRNA vaccines. You will receive either the Moderna or Pfizer (mRNA) vaccine. These vaccines are interchangeable. If you received AstraZeneca for your first or second dose, you will receive Moderna or Pfizer for your booster.

You must be invited to book a booster dose appointment. You can't drop-in at a clinic or call a pharmacy to get a booster.

You will not miss your opportunity to get your booster dose. First and second vaccine doses will continue to protect you from COVID-19 until you get a booster dose.

You will get an invitation about **6 months** after the date of your second dose. To get your booking invitation, make sure:

- You're registered with the [Get Vaccinated system](#)
- Your immunization record is accurate
 - If you're not sure, [log-in to Health Gateway](#) to check
 - [Update your immunization record](#) if it's incorrect or if you got a dose in another province or country

Use the confirmation number from your invitation to book an appointment at a vaccine clinic or pharmacy. You can do this online or by phone.

If you want to get your booster at the same time as a family member, you both must book an appointment.

Depending on your location, you will be able to book an appointment 1 to 5 weeks from the date you get your invitation.

Finding an appointment

Try these suggestions to find more available appointments:

- Increase your location search radius, or search by city or clinic name
- Check regularly for new appointments that get added

Even after you've booked, you can check for new appointments:

- Use the link in your appointment confirmation email or text message to change or reschedule your appointment
- Browse appointment times without losing your appointment
- If you find an appointment you prefer, you can book it and your old appointment will be cancelled

Five Tips for a Covid-19 Safe Holiday Weekend

(From Fraser Health's website: <https://www.fraserhealth.ca/news/2021/Dec/top-five-tips-for-a-covid-19-safe-holiday-season>)

This holiday season, please follow the new [provincial health orders](#) to help stop the spread of COVID-19.

Holiday traditions are important for families and friends, so illuminate the holidays by making health and safety a priority. Follow our tips and keep you and your loved ones safe and healthy - and ready to enjoy the holidays.

Eat, be merry, and be safe.

For many people, the holidays means gathering with family and friends. This holiday season, the Provincial Health Officer has introduced new province-wide restrictions to keep you and your loved ones safe.

If you're the host for celebrations and holidays:

- Indoor personal gatherings at your home or vacation accommodation are limited to your household plus 10 visitors or one other household. Everyone 12 years and older must be fully vaccinated.
- There are no restrictions for outdoor personal gatherings.
- Respect everyone's boundaries around masks and vaccinations when gathering.
- Serve pre-portioned appetizers, rather than dips and shared snack bowls that many people will touch.

To read the full details of the current restrictions visit the [provincial and regional restrictions](#) page.

Holiday travel

The Federal government has advised Canadians to avoid all non-essential travel outside Canada, regardless of vaccination status.

In Canada, all travellers 12 years and four months of age and older need to be fully vaccinated and show proof of vaccination to board a plane, train or staying on a non-essential passenger vessel for more than 24 hours (like a cruise ship).

Check the COVID-19 situation where you plan to visit. Follow local guidance and take precautions to prevent COVID-19. International travellers should plan ahead for the travel requirements of their destination and for returning home.

You can find more information about travelling this winter on Government of B.C.'s [website](#).

Get vaccinated

Vaccinations are one of the most important ways of protecting yourself, your loved ones and your community from COVID-19 and influenza.

Anyone in B.C. five years of age and older is eligible for the COVID-19 vaccine. You can register online, by phone at 1-866-838-2323 or in person at a Service B.C. location. Find your closest immunization clinic at [fraserhealth.ca/vax](https://www.fraserhealth.ca/vax).

COVID-19 isn't the only thing circulating, it's also influenza or "flu" season. Get your free influenza vaccine through your family doctor or local pharmacist. Influenza vaccines are safe, effective and recommended for everyone in B.C. six months of age and older.

Tips for safe shopping

Shop during less busy times to avoid crowds or do your shopping online.

If you are shopping in-person this year, wear a mask and maintain physical distance. Remember to wash your hands often.

If you are feeling unwell, please stay home. Get tested if you have COVID-19 symptoms: [fraserhealth.ca/covid19test](https://www.fraserhealth.ca/covid19test)

Stay active and get outside.

Staying active is an important part of a healthy lifestyle.

Bundle up and take a walk, go for a bike ride, toboggan or snow shoe outdoors with family or friends. You can find more information about staying active this winter [here](#).

Enjoy a happy and healthy holiday season.