
Media Release



Getting youth vaccinated now for school in the fall

June 30, 2021 - For immediate release

Timiskaming Health Unit urges all youth age 12 years and older to get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible. Although younger people who get COVID-19 often have milder symptoms, some children will have more severe disease and may be hospitalized. Being vaccinated also helps prevent the virus from spreading to family and friends and to people more likely to get very sick from COVID-19. The more people who are vaccinated, the sooner kids can get back to being kids.

Youth aged 12 to 17 are encouraged to be fully immunized no later than August 22. Youth should get their first dose of the vaccine by early July to be able to receive their second dose in mid-August. This ensures that they can build immunity before their return to school, as it takes two weeks for a dose of the vaccine to take full effect.

“Full vaccination is the greatest protection a person can have against COVID-19 and its variants, including the Delta variant, and it is a key part of getting our young people back to school in the fall,” says Dr. Glenn Corneil, Acting Medical Officer of Health and CEO for Timiskaming Health Unit. “More than half of eligible school-aged people in Timiskaming have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. It’s a great start for our communities and we are eager to see this number continue to rise.”

The vaccines are safe and effective. All new vaccines have to go through a very specific and scientifically strict process of testing and review. The reason that the COVID-19 vaccines were made so quickly is because governments, public health authorities, and manufacturers around the world made them a priority.

As with other vaccines, there may be side effects. It is normal and expected to have reactions after a person receives the COVID-19 vaccine. Most of these are mild and don’t last, and not everyone gets them. Even if a person experiences side effects after their first dose, they still need to receive the second dose for best protection. Common side effects include soreness, tenderness or redness at the spot where the vaccine was given, feeling tired, headache, fever, general muscle aches or mild flu-like symptoms. It is not possible to get any virus from this vaccine; none of the COVID-19 vaccines available in Canada contain a live virus.

Any parent, caregiver or eligible youth who has questions about the COVID vaccine is invited to contact the health unit at 866-747-4305, ext. 6 or email covidvaccine@timiskaminghu.com.

“We take the well-being of our populations very seriously. For this reason, we study the science carefully and follow expert recommendations. It is natural to ask questions and I appreciate everyone wanting to make informed health decisions. We have been working hard to give reliable information and counter myths circulating in the community,” said Dr. Corneil. “For example, no short cuts were taken in the vaccine approval process. Another myth we are hearing locally is that the vaccine can affect ovulation or fertility. These concerns are simply *not* supported by science.”

Youth and their families can book now for any clinic; visit www.ontario.ca/bookvaccine. Please call the Timiskaming Health Unit if help is needed to make a COVID-19 vaccine appointment at 866-747-4305, ext 6 (Monday to Friday from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. and Saturday and Sunday from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon.) Timiskaming Health Unit has developed a web page specific to youth and vaccines, including a series of videos of Timiskaming's Acting Medical Officer of Health Dr. Corneil responding to questions from local about the COVID-19 vaccine. Parents can also find expert advice at www.kidshealthfirst.ca.

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Media Contact:

Sue Hall

Public Health Promoter

705-647-4305, Ext. 2242

halls@timiskaminghu.com

Ryan Peters

Program Manager

705-647-4305, Ext. 2250

petersr@timiskaminghu.com