

<p><b>IN THIS ISSUE:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP)</b></li> <li>▪ <b>Reviewing Immunization Status for Seniors ≥65 years of age</b></li> <li>▪ <b>REMINDER: Reporting Adverse Event(s) Following Immunization (AEFI)</b></li> <li>▪ <b>New: RSV Vaccine for Seniors</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>FROM:</b></p> <p>Mary Choi MD MPH CCFP FRCPC Associate Medical Officer of Health</p>
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<p><b>Key Messages:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Influenza vaccine is now available to order for high-risk individuals.</li> <li>▪ Administration of influenza vaccine is an opportunity to provide COVID-19, pneumococcal and shingles vaccines to eligible seniors.</li> <li>▪ Health care providers must report any adverse events following immunization (AEFI) by faxing completed forms to 905-565-0426.</li> <li>▪ RSV vaccine (Arexvy) will be publicly funded for residents ≥60 years of age in select high risk settings this fall.</li> </ul>
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- Individuals who are from a First Nation, Inuit, or Métis community, and/or who self-identify as First Nation, Inuit or Métis, and their household members
- Members of racialized and other equity deserving communities
- Individuals 6 months of age and older with the following underlying health conditions:
  - Cardiac or pulmonary disorders
  - Diabetes mellitus or other metabolic disease
  - Cancer
  - Conditions or medication which compromise the immune system
  - Renal disease
  - Anemia or hemoglobinopathy
  - Neurologic or neurodevelopment conditions
  - Morbid obesity (body mass index of >40)
  - Children and adolescents (6 months to 18 years) undergoing treatment with acetylsalicylic acid for long periods
- Health care workers and first responders

**Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP)**

Influenza vaccine is now available to order for high-risk individuals with expected distribution to community health care providers beginning in October. Availability of the vaccine for the general population will begin October 30th. Information related to the COVID-19 fall campaign will be communicated soon.

Influenza vaccines are to be prioritized for individuals at highest risk of severe health outcomes or more likely to require hospitalization.

This includes:

- Residents and staff of congregate living settings (e.g., chronic care facilities, retirement homes)
- People > 65 years of age
- All pregnant individuals
- All children 6 months to 4 years of age

**Influenza Products by Age Group**

Age Group	FluLaval® Tetra (QIV)	Fluzone® Quad (QIV)	Fluzone® High-Dose (QIV-HD)	Fluad® (TIV-adj)
≥ 6 months to 64 years	✓	✓	Not applicable	
≥65 years of age	✓	✓	✓	

*QIV = Quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine*  
*QIV-HD = Quadrivalent inactivated influenza vaccine - High-dose*  
*TIV-adj = Trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine – adjuvanted*

### Product Selection for Adults ≥65 years of age

There is evidence to support the use of QIV-HD product, where available, in adults >65 years of age as it provides better protection against influenza compared to the QIV product. However, the QIV, QIV-HD and TIV-adj all protect against influenza, and the most important thing is for older adults to be vaccinated. Do not delay vaccination to wait for a particular influenza product.

### Dosage by Age

Age	Dosage (IM)	No. of Doses Required
2-8 years	0.5 mL	1 or 2*
9 years and older	0.5 mL 0.7 mL (QIV-HD ≥ 65 years)	1

*\*Previously unvaccinated children 6 months to 8 years of age require 2 doses with an interval of 4 weeks.*

*QIV products are interchangeable; however, it is preferable to complete a 2-dose series with the same product. If the vaccine used for the first dose is not available, the 2-dose series may be completed with a different age-appropriate brand.*

### General Influenza Vaccine Reminders

- Any of the QIV products can be administered to pregnant individuals.
- Any of the influenza vaccines can be administered to egg allergic individuals.
- Multidose vials can be used for 28 days after they have been punctured.
- Patients should only receive one dose of influenza vaccine per season (exception: children 6 months

to 8 years of age getting the vaccine for the first time).

### Ordering Influenza Vaccine

Influenza vaccine orders for high-risk patients can be placed at:

<https://peelregion.ca/health/professionals/V-07-699.htm>. Flu vaccine orders may take approximately 3 to 4 weeks for processing.

Visit: <https://peelregion.ca/health/professionals/com-influenza.htm> for more information.

### UIIP Resources:

- 2023/2024 UIIP Overview and Resources  
<https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/>
- Information for the 2023/2024 Influenza Season  
[https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/docs/flu\\_uiip\\_HCP\\_QA\\_2023-24.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/docs/flu_uiip_HCP_QA_2023-24.pdf)
- Information for individuals 6 months to 64 years  
[https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/docs/flu\\_uiip\\_6mo-64yrs\\_2023-24.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/docs/flu_uiip_6mo-64yrs_2023-24.pdf)
- Information for individuals > 65 years of age  
[https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/docs/flu\\_uiip\\_65yrs\\_older\\_2023-24.pdf](https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/publichealth/flu/uiip/docs/flu_uiip_65yrs_older_2023-24.pdf)

### Reviewing Immunizations Status of Seniors ≥65 years of age

Administration of the influenza vaccine is an opportunity to review immunization status of seniors and provide COVID-19, pneumococcal, and shingles vaccine(s) to eligible patients.

## Publicly funded Pneumococcal Program

<p>Pneumovax®23 (Pneu-P-23)</p>	<p><b>All individuals ≥ 65 years of age:</b> Eligible for one dose (as per routine schedule).</p> <p>Individuals 2 to 64 years of age: who meet specific high-risk criteria.</p> <p><i>Note: One lifetime re-immunization is available to individuals with specific high-risk conditions (5 years from previous dose).</i></p>
<p>Prevnar®13 (Pneu-C-13)</p>	<p><b>Individuals ≥ 50 years of age:</b> who meet specific high-risk criteria.</p>

## Publicly funded Herpes Zoster Program

<p>Shingrix® (HZ)</p>	<p><b>Individuals 65-70 years of age</b> (2-dose series at 0 and 2-6 months).</p> <p>Eligibility has been extended for individuals born in 1949, 1950, 1951 or 1952.</p> <p><b>Prioritize patients in this age group as eligibility ends December 31, 2023.</b></p>
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Additional information about Ontario's Publicly Funded Immunization Programs available at:  
<https://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/pro/programs/immunization/schedule.aspx>

### **REMINDER: Reporting Adverse Event(s) Following Immunization (AEFI)**

Health care providers are required under the *Health Protection and Promotion Act* to report any event which may be related to receipt of a vaccine. Events of

particular importance are those which require medical consultation, unusual or unexpected events. Submitting a report does not mean that the vaccine caused the event.

The AEFI reporting form and additional resources are available at:

<https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/Health-Topics/Immunization/Vaccine-Safety>

Fax AEFI forms to Peel Public Health at **905-565-0426**.

### **New: RSV Vaccine for Seniors**

The Ontario Ministry of Health has announced it will roll out the RSV vaccine (Arexvy) to individuals ≥ 60 years of age who live in long-term care homes, Elder Care Lodges and some retirement homes this fall. It will not be publicly funded for individuals residing in the community.

Primary care providers can discuss the option to privately purchase Arexvy for their patients. However, there are currently no recommendations from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization or the Ministry on the broader use of the vaccine in the community. The Arexvy vaccine will not be available at PPH clinics.

### **Product Information:**

- Indicated for adults ≥ 60 years of age.
- Administered as a single dose of 0.5 mL.
- Requires reconstitution.
- A 14-day period is recommended between receiving Arexvy and any other vaccine, such as COVID-19 and influenza, so that any adverse effects following the vaccination can be better monitored and managed.

For additional product information, refer to the Arexvy product monograph:

[https://pdf.hres.ca/dpd\\_pm/00071904.PDF](https://pdf.hres.ca/dpd_pm/00071904.PDF)