

# NEWS RELEASE

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## Stick to the Youth Vaccine Schedule for a Safer Return to School Says the Health Unit

NIPISSING & PARRY SOUND, ON – The North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit (Health Unit) encourages youth aged 12 to 17 to book their COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible to be fully vaccinated before the start of school in September. Youth should get their first dose of the vaccine by early July in order to be able to receive their second dose in mid-August. This ensures they can build immunity before their return to school, as it takes two weeks for a dose of the vaccine to take full effect.

“We know that youth want to see their friends and have a safer return to school in September,” underlines Andrea McLellan, Director of COVID-19 Immunization Strategy. “More than half of eligible school-aged people have received at least one dose of the COVID-19 vaccine. If you are aged 12 to 17 years and haven’t booked your vaccine appointment yet, we encourage you to do so.”

The COVID-19 vaccine is safe and effective in protecting against COVID-19. Here are some common myths about youth and vaccination:

- **Youth don’t need the vaccine as they don’t get very sick from COVID-19**

Although most youths with COVID-19 have mild symptoms or none at all, some with COVID-19 can get very sick. Youth can also spread COVID-19 to other people. Vaccinating youth protects them from getting sick and reduces virus spread to family members and the community.

- **There are many side effects from the vaccine**

The most common side effects are mild to moderate, and only last from a few hours to a few days. They include pain at the injection site, headache, fatigue, muscle and joint pain, chills, and fever. Even if you experience mild side effects, it is important to receive the second dose.

- **I can get the vaccine at any time**

We encourage youth aged 12 to 17 to be fully immunized no later than August 22, in order for the vaccine to take effect before the start of school in September. As more people get immunized, the more we are protected as a society by reaching herd immunity.

- **The vaccine isn’t safe for individuals under 18 years of age**

The Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine has undergone a strict approval process in Canada as well as many other countries. Ongoing monitoring continues as vaccines are rolling out, as it does for all other vaccines administered in Canada. There have been reports from the United States and Israel regarding cases of heart muscle inflammation after vaccination; these cases occurred more commonly with second doses, and were relatively mild, responding to minor treatment and rest. All countries that have begun to immunize youth with mRNA vaccines have continued to recommend their use.

Youth aged 12 to 17 can book at any COVID-19 vaccination clinic in the district, or at a local pharmacy. Either the eligible student or their parents can book the appointment online at [Ontario.ca/book-vaccine](https://Ontario.ca/book-vaccine) or by calling the provincial booking line at [1-833-943-3900](tel:1-833-943-3900). Youth can also put their name on the Health Unit's [standby list](#) available each day clinics are running, which allows some individuals to receive same-day vaccination. Individuals who are turning 12 this year are encouraged to book their vaccine as soon as they can after their birthday.

For more information, visit [myhealthunit.ca/covid19vaccine](https://myhealthunit.ca/covid19vaccine).

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