



# COMMUNITY UPDATE

*The latest from Northern Health*

November 3, 2021

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## COVID-19

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### **Northern Health appeal for COVID-19 vaccination and prevention, to reduce strain on resources**

Northern Health is appealing to residents of Northeast BC to get immunized and make other COVID-19 precautions a priority, for their own safety and to reduce pressure on the region's health care system.

To read more, visit the [Northern Health Stories site](#).

Visit the Northern Health website for a [list of all Northern Health COVID-19 immunization clinics and other resources](#).

To book a vaccine appointment, register online at: [www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/](http://www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca/), call 1-833-838-2323, or visit a Service BC office [listed here](#).

### **Haisla Nation's generous gift to Northern Health will leave a lasting legacy**

During the early days of the COVID-19 pandemic, the Haisla Nation stepped forward to provide a \$300,000 donation to Northern Health to ensure staff and physicians have the tools and equipment available to support them in the work they do.

For more of this story, visit the [Northern Health Stories site](#).

### **COVID-19 immunization plan - next steps**

In late October, the Province released details about third dose (for eligible people) and booster shots of the COVID-19 vaccine.

- mRNA vaccines (Moderna Spikevax and Pfizer Comirnaty) will be given for the third dose and booster shots, for all people
- the third dose is for people who do not develop the same immune response to the first two doses of the vaccine (some people who are moderately to severely immunocompromised)
- a booster dose is an additional non-urgent, non-compulsory vaccine that gets immunity back up to a desirable level of protection for an extended period of time
- the booster dose will be available for British Columbians beginning in January 2022

For more detailed information, please see this information about third doses and booster shots

- [Why you need a booster shot](#) (gov.bc.ca)
- [Province-wide booster dose is next step in COVID-19 immunization plan](#) (gov.bc.ca)
- [Third dose vs. booster dose](#) (BCCDC)

#### **Booking a booster:**

- Be registered in the [Get Vaccinated system](#)
- Book online when notified
- Call 1-833-838-2323 if there is difficulty accessing online booking

#### **Booking a third dose:**

- People needing a third dose [will be contacted](#) by the provincial Get Vaccinated system

Booster shots and third doses will be by appointment only, they are not available for walk-ins.

### **COVID-19 orders and policy – upcoming and in effect**

For information about current Provincial orders (such as the acute- and long-term care visitors policy, and restrictions around gatherings and events), please see:

- [New COVID-19 order for the Northern Health Authority](#)
- [NH Orders and FAQ resources](#)
- [NH Public Health COVID-19 Order Enforcement Actions](#)

For complaints or concern related to orders, please call [250-565-7322](tel:250-565-7322) or email [php@northernhealth.ca](mailto:php@northernhealth.ca).

### **Northern BC community immunization coverage**

Immunization coverage for every community in Northern Health is available for you on the [Northern BC community immunization coverage page](#). This link includes both first and second dose counts and percentages per community and is updated every week.

### **Community Toolkit**

To empower local partners to share helpful information, we have created a [COVID-19 Community Toolkit](#) - a digital resource for community partners, which includes vaccine clinic information (including [clinic schedules](#)), a community guide, trusted information and links, and more!

## BC vaccination coverage rates and COVID-19 activity

### BCCDC COVID-19 dashboard

Visit the BCCDC [COVID-19 surveillance dashboard](#) for information by local health area (LHA) and community health service area (CHSA).

### COVID-19 Numbers

As of October 29\*, **15,315** cases have been reported in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic.

- Cases currently active: **817**
- New cases: **104**
- Currently in hospital: **82**
  - Currently in ICU level care in hospital: **24**
- Deaths in the NH region since the beginning of the pandemic: **212**

\***Please note** that the BC COVID-19 Dashboard was not updated on November 2, the above numbers represent the October 29 numbers. Per the [BC COVID-19 pandemic update for November 1](#), Northern Health had 86 new cases, for a total of 764 cases.

For the latest provincial numbers, see the [BC COVID-19 dashboard](#), which is updated Monday-Friday. The dashboard may not work in all browsers; Chrome is suggested.

As well, for a visual comparison of COVID-19 cases in BC by HSDA to other Canadian and global jurisdictions, see the [COVID-19 Epidemiology app](#). It's updated on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays.

- [BC COVID-19 pandemic update](#) – November 1, 2021
- [BCCDC Situation Report](#) – October 27, 2021

### Trusted links and resources for COVID-19

- [Northern Health online booking form - COVID-19 test](#)
- [BC Centre for Disease Control](#)
- [HealthLink BC COVID-19 page](#)
- [WHO FAQ](#)
- [Health Canada FAQ](#)
- [COVID-19 content in other languages](#)
- WorkSafe BC - [COVID-19 information and resources](#)
- Northern Health Virtual Primary and Community Care Clinic: **1-844-645-7811**
- Northern Health Environmental Health Officer Line: **1-250-565-7322**
- Non-medical info: call 1-888-COVID19 / 1-888-268-4319 7 days, 7:30 am - 8 pm

For current information on restrictions on travel, gatherings and other issues, see the [Provincial Health Officer's COVID-19 webpage](#).

## Overdose prevention and response

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### Safer tablet injection – New resources available

Tablet medications contain fillers that can cause harm when injected, which can be reduced by using harm reduction supplies and techniques. New pamphlets are available about [safer drug use](#) and tablet injection:

- [Sterifilt FAST](#)
- [Cotton Filters](#)
- [Preparing for Injection](#)

To order pamphlets email [harmreduction@northernhealth.ca](mailto:harmreduction@northernhealth.ca). There are also [videos](#) available about filtering tablet medication for injection.

#### Key Messages:

- Filters remove fillers; they don't steal your drugs.
- Tablet medications have fillers in them (e.g. coatings and powders). When injected, fillers can cause serious infections, abscesses and damage to the veins, skin, heart, and lungs.
- Filters effectively filter some harmful particles from the solution.
- You can use filters and other harm reduction supplies for safer injection.

## Organizational news

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### All health care workers fully vaccinated

In order to best protect patients and residents, all employees, medical staff, and other service providers who work in health care locations and in the health sector are now fully vaccinated.

### Flu season is quickly approaching

Getting the influenza vaccination is more important than ever this year, especially with a health authority already experiencing a COVID-19 surge.

With more people returning to the workplace, children back in school and changes to public health mandates, it is expected to see an increase of influenza cases this year compared to last year.

Peak influenza season is from December to February, and it takes a minimum of two weeks for antibodies against the flu to develop fully following vaccination. Northern Health will start offering influenza vaccine beginning the week of October 18, 2021. For more information about flu vaccination, please see:

- [Northern Health influenza information](#)
- [BCCDC influenza information](#)
- [CDC influenza information](#)

For information about the flu vaccine clinics being offered in the region, please see the [Northern Health flu information site](#), and the [ImmunizeBC Find an Influenza \(Flu\) Clinic site](#).