



Message from Dr. Verna Yiu & Dr. Laura McDougall

Rollout of AstraZeneca

Dear staff, physicians and volunteers,

The next group of eligible Albertans will be able to start booking COVID-19 immunizations starting March 10 at 8 a.m.

This group will be able to receive the Covishield/AstraZeneca vaccine only at this time.

The grouping includes:

- i. All Albertans born in 1957. This cohort will be able to book an immunization appointment using the AHS online booking tool, and by calling Health Link at 811.
- ii. First Nations, Metis and Inuit born in 1972. This cohort will be able to book an immunization appointment ONLY by calling 811.

Covishield is the vaccine produced by the Serum Institute of India, and considered equivalent to AstraZeneca. This vaccine was recently approved by Health Canada.

Pending vaccine supply, Albertans born in 1958-1971 will be offered a chance to book in the coming days, rolling one year at a time. At this time, approximately 58,500 doses of the vaccine are available. This gives the opportunity for those individuals who are part of phase 2D to be immunized earlier than their sequenced phase, which is expected to start in May.

The initial doses of Covishield/AstraZeneca vaccine will NOT be available at pharmacies.

Covishield/AstraZeneca will be offered in communities in each zone across Alberta, however, some individuals will need to travel outside their home community if they choose to receive this vaccine.

In general, Alberta Health is recommending Covishield/AstraZeneca vaccine for Albertans, 18 to 64 without a contraindication such as a severe reaction to a vaccine ingredient.

Albertans in the target age group can choose if they would like to receive the Covishield/AstraZeneca vaccine now or wait until their sequenced phase to receive one of the mRNA vaccines (Pfizer or Moderna).

Additional information will be provided in the coming days about who will be included and the timing of phases 2B and 2C of the vaccine roll out. Individuals potentially belonging to those phases, including healthcare workers, can still choose to receive Covishield/AstraZeneca if eligible and they would prefer to be immunized sooner.

Like all of the vaccines currently approved for use in Canada, the Covidshield/AstraZeneca vaccine has proven to be highly effective in preventing serious illness and death in adults 18-64. It is provided in a two-dose regime, given approximately 16 weeks apart.

To provide Albertans with more information on eligibility, and what has been done to enhance the experience when booking a COVID-19 immunization, an [open letter to Albertans](#) has been posted online.

For more information on the different vaccines and eligibility timelines, please visit ahs.ca/vaccine or alberta.ca/covid19-vaccine.

Thank you for your continued support.

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