

COVID-19 vaccine booster dose / 3rd dose post-immunization observation period

In the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#), the National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommends that “recipients of vaccines should be kept under observation for at least 15 minutes after immunization; 30 minutes is a safer interval when there is a specific concern about possible vaccine allergy”. During the 15-minute observation period a large proportion of rare but potentially serious allergic events (anaphylaxis) and syncope (fainting, including with fall and head injury or seizure) can occur. However, in recognition of the need to accelerate the delivery of the COVID-19 booster program during the emergency response to the Omicron variant, **a reduced post-immunization observation period, between 5-15 minutes, may be considered for administration of third doses of COVID-19 vaccine on a temporary basis during the pandemic if specific conditions are met.** * This would be an exception to usual immunization guidance and this approach could be used in select immunization clinic settings if deemed necessary by the regional health authority Medical Health Officer/ medical immunization leader, weighing the risks of a reduction in observation period (e.g., small increased risk of delayed identification of an adverse event that may require immediate medical attention) with improved efficiency to allow more individuals to be immunized in a given time period. The additional time required to identify those eligible for a shortened observation and provide the counseling outlined below may negate the benefit of the shortened observation period. Whether these processes improve efficiency of throughput has not been studied.

The immunizer should document on each client’s chart when a shortened post-immunization observation period is utilized.

* The vaccine recipient must meet the following conditions for consideration of a shortened post-immunization observation period:

- Past history of receipt of two doses of the same type of COVID-19 vaccine (e.g., mRNA) and no known history of allergic reactions to a previous dose or to any component of the vaccine being considered for administration.
- No history of other immediate post-vaccination reactions (e.g., syncope with or without seizure) after receipt of any vaccines.
- The vaccine recipient is accompanied by a parent/guardian (in the case of a child) or responsible adult who will act as chaperone to monitor the vaccine recipient for a minimum of 15 minutes post-vaccination and remain within the vicinity of the clinic (e.g., parking lot) during this time. In the case of two responsible adults, both can be vaccine recipients for the purposes of this criterion, if both agree to monitor the other post-vaccination.
- The vaccine recipient will not be operating a motorized vehicle or self-propelled or motorized wheeled transportation (e.g., bicycle, skateboard, rollerblades, scooter), or machinery for a minimum of 15 minutes after vaccination.
- The vaccine recipient and the parent/guardian or responsible adult chaperone are aware of when and how to seek post-vaccination advice and given instructions on what to do if assistance and medical services are required.
- The vaccine recipient and the parent/guardian/responsible adult agree to remain in the post-vaccination waiting area for the reduced post-vaccination observation period and to notify staff if the recipient feels or looks at all unwell before leaving the clinic. They should be informed that an individual exhibiting any symptom suggestive of an evolving AEFI at the end of the shortened post-observation period necessitates a longer period of observation in the clinic.