

## **Patient Newsletter – January 15, 2021**

Important COVID-19 Vaccine Information:

In the last few weeks, we have seen significant movement in our understanding of the COVID-19 vaccines. As of today, here is what we know.

### **The vaccines are safe**

The vaccines approved for use in Canada work by sending a message to our body's immune system to stimulate our natural immune response. Over 70,000 people were involved in the trials of the approved vaccines. The mRNA technology on which the vaccines are built started in the early 1990's, so this science is not actually new to us. As of January, more than 15 million people have been vaccinated worldwide.

### **The vaccines work**

We know the vaccines protect us from getting COVID-19 and getting very sick from COVID-19. A 94-95% efficacy level, as seen with the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, is as the results of the best vaccines we have for preventing any disease. People who were vaccinated for the COVID-19 virus were about 20 times less likely to get sick with COVID-19 than those who were not vaccinated. They are also likely prevent us from spreading COVID-19 to our loved ones and those around us, although studies are ongoing. This level of efficacy will play a major role in helping slow spread and move us towards a post-pandemic Canada.

### **There will be people ahead of us in line, and people behind us**

Ontario's goal is to vaccinate every eligible person by end of 2021. In general, older adults and others at high risk of getting sick or transmitting the virus will be vaccinated before others. It will take some time to vaccinate enough of our community members and achieve shared protection through herd immunity. During that time, it is crucial that we all continue to follow public guidance regarding masking and distance, even after we are immunized – until experts say otherwise.

*Note: The above information was adapted from Ontario College of Family Physicians.*

### **Will New Vision Family Health Team carry the COVID-19 vaccine**

New Vision Family Health Team is NOT carrying the COVID-19 vaccine in clinic at this time, nor will we be for the next number of months. For the foreseeable future all COVID-19 vaccines will be distributed via the provincial distribution plan.

You can find information about the COVID-19 vaccine online via Ontario Government or Region of Waterloo PH websites (see below links).

1. Ontario COVID-19 Vaccine Information:

[https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario?gclid=CjwKCAiAudD\\_BRBXEiwAudakX0fdTcoFo63oiffwYsP3cwlzo2ncRBEIF2Kf0e6gLLo5e3k7vipKWBoCUJoQAvD\\_BwE#&utm\\_source=google&utm\\_medium=cpc&utm\\_campaign=COVID-19%20vaccines-ontario](https://covid-19.ontario.ca/covid-19-vaccines-ontario?gclid=CjwKCAiAudD_BRBXEiwAudakX0fdTcoFo63oiffwYsP3cwlzo2ncRBEIF2Kf0e6gLLo5e3k7vipKWBoCUJoQAvD_BwE#&utm_source=google&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=COVID-19%20vaccines-ontario)

2. Region of Waterloo PH COVID-19 Vaccine Information:

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/health-and-wellness/covid-19-vaccine.aspx>

3. Region of Waterloo Distribution Task Force Website:

<https://www.regionofwaterloo.ca/en/living-here/waterloo-region-covid-19-vaccine-distribution-task-force.aspx>

**Please read through these resources before calling our office regarding the vaccine.** If, or when, there is planning for the vaccines to be given in our office, we will make you aware. Until that time, we are not keeping a waiting list.

We are so glad to see the interest in the vaccine and will provide more details when we have them.

Thank you all for your patience and continued practice of Public Health guidelines.

New Vision Family Health Team