

Ministry of Long-Term Care

Fact Sheet for Long-Term Care Residents

This fact sheet includes information to support your understanding, health, and wellbeing this Respiratory Illness Season.

Vaccine Quick Facts

- Flu, COVID-19, RSV and pneumococcal vaccines are all strongly recommended for every resident.
- Annual Vaccines:
 - Flu: recommended once per year for all residents.
 - COVID-19: recommended twice per year for residents who are 65 and over or meet specific high-risk criteria.
- One-Time Vaccines:
 - RSV: recommended once for residents.
 - Pneumococcal: recommended once for residents.
- Please consider getting your vaccines this year.
- Staff at your home can help to answer any questions that you may have, clarify your eligibility and let you know when each vaccine is available.
- The flu, COVID-19, RSV and pneumococcal vaccines can be administered at the same time, if they are available at the same time.

Influenza (Flu)	
Vaccines	Antiviral Medications
- You are encouraged to get your flu shot every year to prevent serious illness. - Flu can be especially dangerous for older people.	- Antiviral medications for flu can prevent serious illness if you take them in the first few days after symptoms start. - In the event of an outbreak, you may be advised to take antivirals to prevent you from getting sick. - You can talk to staff in your home about availability of antivirals in case you need them.

COVID-19	
Vaccines	Antiviral Medications
- It is strongly recommended that you get the COVID-19 vaccine even if you have had a COVID-19 infection or previously received the vaccine. - You can receive a COVID-19 shot in the fall: - if it has been at least three months since your last one; or - three months after having had a test-confirmed COVID-19 infection.	- Antiviral treatments for COVID-19 (including Paxlovid and Remdesivir) can prevent serious illness if you take them in the first few days after symptoms start. - You can talk to staff in your home about availability of antivirals in case you need them.

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)
Vaccines
You are encouraged to get your RSV vaccine if you have not received it previously.

- The RSV vaccine provides multi-year protection.
- Boosters are not needed at this time.

Pneumococcal

Vaccines

- Anyone can get pneumococcal disease. You may be at higher risk if you are 65 years or older or have certain medical conditions or risk factors.
- The pneumococcal vaccine protects you from serious infections like meningitis, sepsis and pneumonia.
- Residents may be eligible for the new pneumococcal vaccine. Speak to your health care provider to see if you are eligible.
- If eligible, one lifetime dose of the new pneumococcal vaccine is recommended.

Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC)

- Following IPAC practices is always important, especially during respiratory illness season.
- You can help keep your home safe by:
 - Cleaning your hands often, using hand sanitizer or soap and warm water.
 - Staying up to date with vaccinations.
 - Wearing a mask, if and when possible.

- Letting staff know if you are feeling ill.
- Telling your friends and family not to visit when they are ill.

What to expect if your home is in outbreak

- If your home, or the part of the home you live in, has an outbreak of a respiratory illness, here is what you can expect:
 - Your home will work with the local public health unit to follow the [IPAC Standard](#) under the [Fixing Long-Term Care Act](#) and guidance from the Ministry of Health.
 - If you feel sick, you should stay in your room and avoid close contact with others. You can still go to important medical appointments but should wear a mask.
 - Essential visitors, like caregivers, can still visit during an outbreak. Other visitors may be limited.
 - Staff, caregivers and visitors must always wear a mask.
 - Group activities may be paused, and residents with symptoms may be kept apart from others.

- If safe, group activities may continue for residents who were exposed but are not sick to support mental health and wellbeing.
- Your rights and wellbeing will be respected and cared for.
- The home will keep residents and families updated about the outbreak.
- If you are very sick or receiving end-of-life care, you have the right to have loved ones with you at all times, as per the [*Residents' Bill of Rights*](#).

What to expect if you have COVID-19 or your roommate has COVID-19

- If you are unable to wear a mask, you will need to stay in your room for at least 10 days and until you are feeling better.
- If you can wear a mask and are feeling better, you may end isolation five days after your symptoms began or five days after testing positive. However, you must wear a mask outside of your room.
- While in isolation, you can go for short walks nearby wearing a mask, with a staff member or caregiver who is wearing personal protective equipment.

- If your roommate has COVID-19, you will also be isolated in case you get sick.
- If you do not develop symptoms, you may leave isolation after a minimum of five days.
- After five days, you should wear a well-fitting mask, and physically distance from others when outside of your room for seven more days from the last time you may have been exposed to COVID-19.

Additional Resources

- Learn more about the flu shot at [Ontario.ca/flu](https://ontario.ca/flu).
- Learn more about the RSV shot at [Ontario.ca/rsv](https://ontario.ca/rsv) or refer to the [Ministry of Health Fact Sheet](#) about RSV.
- Learn more about the COVID-19 shot at [Ontario.ca/COVID-19](https://ontario.ca/COVID-19).
- Learn about eligibility for [COVID-19 antiviral treatment](#).

- Learn more about the pneumococcal shot with [Ontario's routine immunization schedule](#).
- For general inquiries, contact the Ministry of Long-Term Care at ltc.info@ontario.ca.