

COVID-19: Information for solid organ transplant recipients

UPDATED: Oct 1, 2025

COVID-19 continues to circulate in British Columbia. BC Transplant and the transplant clinical teams recommend patients get fully vaccinated (an initial 2 doses) and encourage patients to receive at least 1 additional vaccine dose against COVID-19 per year (usually around Spring or Fall).

If you have cold or flu-like symptoms (particularly fever, shortness of breath, cough) and test positive for COVID-19, please let your transplant team know. Transplant recipients are among the patient groups who have priority access to COVID-19 treatments in B.C.

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1. Getting vaccinated

All pre- and post-transplant patients are recommended to get vaccinated against COVID-19 and encouraged to get at least 1 additional vaccine dose annually.

Primary Series

A complete primary vaccine series for solid organ transplant recipients aged 5 years and up involves **two doses** of a COVID-19 vaccine. Two doses of COVID-19 vaccines offer better protection for people who are immunocompromised, and is safe and recommended for transplant recipients who have never been vaccinated. A third dose may also be recommended by your healthcare team. If you were vaccinated before your transplant, you may have only received one dose of a COVID-19 vaccine and that is acceptable.

A complete primary vaccines series for transplant recipients aged 6 months to under 5 years involves **three doses** of the COVID-19 Moderna SPIKEVAX vaccine, or **four doses** of the Pfizer BioNTech COMIRNATY vaccine.

Additional Doses

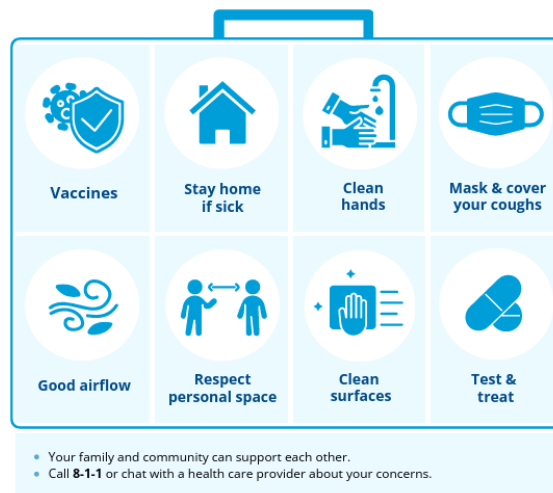
Additional doses are expected to increase protection against SARS-CoV-2 infection and COVID-19 symptomatic and severe disease. Protection wanes over time and vaccines are continually updated to help protect against the latest variants. **Transplant recipients (age 6 months and up) are encouraged to receive at least 1 additional COVID-19 vaccine dose per year.**

Register with www.getvaccinated.gov.bc.ca or the BC Vaccine Line (call 1-833-838-2323) to be notified when to book each vaccine dose.

The BCCDC has the most current information about [getting a vaccine](#).

2. COVID-19 and transplant recipients

- Outcomes for transplant patients who get COVID-19 have improved in recent years, especially compared to the early days of the pandemic. Some people may only have mild symptoms or none at all. However, transplant patients still have a higher risk of getting seriously ill from COVID-19 compared to people without a transplant.
- Other things that can increase the risk of more serious illness include being older, having a recent episode of rejection, or having other health conditions such as lung disease, being on dialysis, or having diabetes.



- We still suggest that recipients assess their own level of risk tolerance for choosing activities and interactions within the guidelines set out by Public Health based on their specific circumstances. The [BCCDC's Personal Toolkit](https://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks) is a good resource for considering what tools to use and when for preventing COVID-19 or other respiratory viruses (<http://www.bccdc.ca/health-info/diseases-conditions/covid-19/prevention-risks>).

3. COVID-19 treatments for transplant recipients

Adult and pediatric transplant recipients are among the patient groups who have priority access to COVID-19 treatments in B.C. If eligible, the medications should be started within five to seven days of experiencing severe signs and symptoms of infection (especially persistent fever, shortness of breath, cough). You will also need a positive COVID-19 test to be eligible.

- **If you develop cold or flu-like symptoms, you should get tested for COVID-19** (rapid antigen or PCR). In addition, if you develop symptoms during the flu season, testing for influenza is also recommended for potential treatment.
- **If you test positive, contact your transplant care team.** They will determine if you might benefit from available treatments. These days, most transplant patients recover from COVID-19 without

the need for any treatment. If you are unsure, your transplant team will know and be able to monitor you.

- If you are eligible, the preferred, most effective and safer treatment (remdesivir) for transplant patients requires three days of intravenous (IV) infusions at a health authority infusion facility. Your transplant care team will work with the health authority where you live to ensure you receive it.
- PAXLOVID is an oral COVID-19 treatment available in B.C.; however, it is **not recommended for transplant patients** because it interacts with transplant medications.

This document is current as of Oct 1, 2025. Check the BC Transplant or the BCCDC website for the most current available information and updates.