

Sep 20, 2021

To the valued patients of the NNFHT,

As most of you will have heard, the provincial government announced that as of September 22, 2021, new requirements for proof of vaccination against COVID-19 in certain settings will be implemented. Additionally, many employers have already instituted mandatory vaccination policies in the workplace. As a result, we, your family doctors and primary care providers, have started to receive requests for documentation of medical exemption to immunization against COVID-19.

We would like to make clear that, although there may be many reasons people may choose not to get vaccinated, as physicians we can only provide documentation with regards to established medical contradictions.

Currently there are only two circumstances that may warrant a medical exemption to immunization with an mRNA COVID-19:

1. A proven and documented severe allergic reaction to a previously administered COVID vaccine or any of the ingredients contained within it.  
*\*\* Please note that even when an allergy is present, the vaccine can often be safely administered in a controlled setting such as a specialized allergy clinic. As such, a medical exemption may require consultation with an allergist to confirm whether or not the vaccine can be given. \*\**
2. A medically confirmed diagnosis of pericarditis or myocarditis (both extremely rare) following administration of a first dose of a COVID vaccine. In this case, it is currently recommended that further immunization be delayed until more data is available.

In accordance with guidance from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Ontario and with the agreement of Niagara Region Public Health, medical exemptions to vaccination for other reasons will not be provided.

Vaccination against COVID-19 is key to not only keeping you protected from the potentially devastating effects of a COVID-19 infection, but also to avoiding further lockdowns, to keeping our children in school, and hopefully to being able to return to some sense of normalcy in our daily lives.

As your family doctors and primary care providers we have stood by you through this pandemic and have been dedicated to using our knowledge and training to keep you and your families healthy, and we would be happy to address any concerns or questions you may have about the Pfizer (Comirnaty), AstraZeneca (Vaxzevria), and Moderna (Spikevax) vaccines that are currently available, or about symptoms you experienced after a first dose.

We also encourage you to visit these trusted resources for more information about the vaccines and for answers to frequently asked questions about the vaccines:

- <https://www.niagararegion.ca/health/covid-19/vaccination/frequently-asked-questions.aspx>
- <https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines.html>

-Sincerely, your NNFHT physicians