MEDICAL ADVISORY: Recommendation for Pfizer Use in Individuals 18 – 24 Years Old

TO:  
Family Physicians  
Pharmacists  
Infectious Disease Physicians  
St. Joseph’s Centre for Ambulatory Health Services, Urgent Care  
Emergency Departments  

FOR YOUR INFORMATION:  
Central West Medical Officers of Health  
Academy of Medicine  
Dr. Michael Stacey, VP Medical, Hamilton Health Sciences  
Mr. Bruce Squires, President, McMaster Children’s Hospital  
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FROM: Dr. Ninh Tran, Associate Medical Officer of Health, Hamilton Public Health Services

DATE: September 29th, 2021

This medical advisory provides an update regarding the use of Moderna in individuals aged 18 to 24 years old. Out of an abundance of caution, the Ministry of Health is issuing a preferential recommendation for the use of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for individuals aged 18 to 24 years old effective immediately due to an observed increase of pericarditis/myocarditis following vaccination with Moderna (please see linked resource below). This condition was seen particularly in males, and the majority of cases have been mild with individuals recovering quickly, normally without anti-inflammatory medications. Symptoms have typically been reported within one-week post-vaccination, more commonly after the second dose.

This recommendation is based on current available analysis from Ontario’s adverse event following immunization surveillance system and on the advice of Ontario’s Children COVID-19 Vaccine Table, Ontario Vaccine Clinical Advisory Group, and Public Health Ontario. This recommendation is also based on the increased and reliable supply of the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine and the fact that individuals who received Moderna for their first dose can safely take the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for their second dose. Mixing vaccines is safe and effective, and full vaccination with two doses of an mRNA vaccine offers the greatest protection against COVID-19 and the delta variant.

Individuals aged 18 to 24 years old can receive Moderna if they so choose as long as they have been counselled on the risks and informed consent has been provided. The province will continue using the Pfizer-BioNTech vaccine for youth ages 12 to 17 (including youth turning 12 in 2021).
Guidance Documents