



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Communicable Diseases and Immunization Service
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Date: August 10, 2021

Administrative Circular: 2021:32

ATTN: Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

**Re: Update to Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 2: Immunization,
Part 4 - Biological Products & Appendix E – Management of Biologicals**

Part 4 – Biological Products

COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine BNT162b2 (Pfizer)

Doses and Schedule:

- Footnote C has been revised to indicate that first dose recipients will receive an invitation to book dose 2 at 4 weeks after dose 1. The preferred interval between dose 1 and 2 is 6-8 weeks, with the exception of those living or working in outbreak communities and individuals who meet approved criteria for an expedited dose 2.

Administration:

- Footnote F on page 1 and Footnote B on page 2 have been added to indicate that prior to dilution, it is not a requirement for the vaccine to come to room temperature, but it does need to be fully thawed.

Adverse Events:

- Facial paralysis/Bell's palsy has been added as a potential adverse event.

Please remove page numbers: 1-6 dated July 12, 2021
Please add new page numbers: 1-6 dated August 10, 2021

COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine mRNA-1273 (Moderna)

Doses and Schedule:

- Footnote D has been revised to indicate that first dose recipients will receive an invitation to book dose 2 at 4 weeks after dose 1. The preferred interval between dose 1 and 2 is 6-8 weeks, with the exception of those living or working in

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outbreak communities and individuals who meet approved criteria for an expedited dose 2.

Administration:

- Content under Storage and Handling has been revised to indicate the vaccine can be pre-loaded into a syringe for up to 24 hours following first vial puncture.
- Footnote A has been added to indicate that the recommendation to allow the vaccine to sit for at least 15 minutes at room temperature prior to administration is intended for patient comfort only, and is not a requirement, particularly if there is concern that the vaccine may exceed room temperature (i.e., greater than +25°C).

Adverse Events:

- Facial paralysis/Bell's palsy has been added as a potential adverse event.

Please remove page numbers: 1-4 dated July 12, 2021
Please add new page numbers: 1-4 dated August 10, 2021

Appendix E – Management of Biologicals

Guidance for Receiving and Handling the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine (including dry ice procedures)

- Content under 'Replenishing the thermal shipping container' has been revised to indicate that the thermal shipping container not be opened for more than three minutes at a time.
- Content under 'Thawing' has been updated to include refrigerator (+2°C to +8°C) and room temperature (up to +25°C) parameters. Footnote A has been added to indicate that prior to dilution, it is not a requirement for the vaccine to come to room temperature, but it does need to be fully thawed.
- The first bullet under 'Use' has been revised to indicate that the vaccine may be at room temperature (up to +25°C) for no more than 2 hours prior to dilution and includes footnote A.

Please remove page numbers: 1-12 dated March 30 & May 20, 2021
Please add new page numbers: 1-12 dated August 10, 2021

Guidance for Receiving and Handling the Moderna COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine

- Footnote A has been added to page 3 to indicate that the recommendation to allow the vaccine to sit for at least 15 minutes at room temperature prior to administration is intended for patient comfort only, and is not a requirement, particularly if there is concern that the vaccine may exceed room temperature (i.e., greater than +25°C).

Please remove page numbers: 1-4 dated June 16, 2021
Please add new page numbers: 1-4 dated August 10, 2021

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Stephanie Meier, Senior Practice Leader, BCCDC (telephone: 604-707-2577 / email: stephanie.meier@bccdc.ca).

Sincerely,



Monika Naus MD MHSc FRCPC FACPM
Medical Director
Communicable Diseases & Immunization Service
BC Centre for Disease Control

pc:

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