

# Vaccine Costs and Access in Alberta: What Patients Need to Know

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This fact sheet explains how access to vaccines works in Alberta, including which vaccines are publicly funded, why some vaccines require out-of-pocket payment, and how recent policy changes affect patients' ability to protect their health.

## Why This Matters to Patients

Vaccines are a key part of preventing serious illness. When access depends on cost or eligibility, patients may be forced to choose between preventive care and other essential expenses. Understanding how Alberta's vaccine funding works helps patients plan, ask informed questions, and advocate for equitable access.

## How Vaccine Access Works in Alberta

In Alberta, vaccines must first be approved by Health Canada and recommended by national experts. The province then decides which vaccines are publicly funded, who is eligible, and how they are delivered. As a result, not all recommended vaccines are free for all patients.

## Which Vaccines Are Publicly Funded?

Alberta publicly funds many routine childhood vaccines and some adult vaccines, particularly for people at higher risk of severe illness. Public funding often depends on age, medical condition, living situation, or specific risk factors. Even when a vaccine is recommended nationally, it may only be covered for certain groups in Alberta. Current information on publicly funded vaccines is available in Alberta's Immunization Schedule:

<https://www.alberta.ca/immunization-routine-schedule>

## Which Vaccines May Require Payment?

Some adult vaccines are not publicly funded or are only partially funded in Alberta. This can include vaccines recommended for older adults, people with chronic disease, or individuals seeking additional protection. Patients may be required to pay out of pocket, and costs can vary depending on the vaccine, provider, and location.

## How Cost and Access Affect Patients

Out-of-pocket costs, limited clinic locations, and inconsistent information can create barriers to vaccination. Patients may delay or decline vaccines due to cost, even when they are recommended. These barriers can increase the risk of preventable illness and widen health inequities.

Developed by the Health Coalition of Alberta to support patient education, informed decision-making, and equitable access to vaccines in Alberta. Program details and eligibility may change; patients are encouraged to confirm current information with a health care provider or public health clinic.