



March 18, 2021

Spring is coming, get your vaccine.

Dear Albertans:

Our Strategic COVID-19 Pandemic Committee enjoys spring because of the feeling of hope and freedom it brings. After a long hard winter of sheltering inside, being able to shed layers of protective clothing and enjoying the sun feels like being released from a prison.

Similarly, all Albertans have endured a very long and hard year with COVID. The strategy, up to now, has been to play defence by protecting ourselves and the ones we care about by giving things up. Albertans did that brilliantly. There are many people in the province who owe their health and their lives to those sacrifices. The strategy was to do this for as long as it took to get a vaccine that would allow us to stop the COVID spread and to resume our normal lives. That time has arrived! It is time to get the vaccine, so we can go on the offence against the virus. As soon as we stop the spread with the help of the vaccine, we can regain our freedom to meet and socialize with other people, restart the economy and revitalize the businesses in our neighbourhoods that have sacrificed so much.

The Edmonton Zone Medical Staff Association urges everyone who is eligible to get the vaccine as soon as they can. We also urge you to help your friends, neighbors and relatives to get vaccinated as soon as possible. That might be guiding them to the information regarding where and when they can get the shot, helping them register for an appointment, or transporting them to their appointment.

The question most often asked of us currently is, "Which vaccine should I get?" All of the vaccines approved for use in Canada are extremely effective against COVID-19 and are highly effective (greater than 98%) against serious illness and death. Our answer is the same as most experts. The best vaccine to get is whichever one you are offered.

Sadly, some people are falsely claiming that the vaccines are dangerous, contain the COVID-19 virus or contain particles for tracking your location. These claims are completely untrue. Do not let these myths cause you or the people you care about to delay getting these health protecting vaccines at your first opportunity.

If you have questions, please contact your family physician or find information on these websites:

<https://www.canada.ca/en/health-canada/services/drugs-health-products/covid19-industry/drugs-vaccines-treatments/vaccines.html>

<https://www.albertahealthservices.ca/topics/Page17389.aspx>

<https://www.alberta.ca/covid19-vaccine.aspx>

<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/coronavirus/in-depth/coronavirus-vaccine/art-20484859>

Sincerely,

Dr. James Talbot

Dr. Noel Gibney

Co-Chairs Strategic COVID-19 Pandemic Committee
Edmonton Zone Medical Staff Association