



Renfrew County and District Health Unit
"Optimal Health for All in Renfrew County and District"

For Immediate Release

(Pembroke, Ontario, October 6, 2026)

Respiratory Illness Season is Here: RCDHU Encourages Residents to Get Vaccinated

Renfrew County and District Health Unit (RCDHU) is encouraging residents to get protected with recommended seasonal and respiratory vaccines. COVID-19, flu, respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), and pneumococcal disease can lead to serious illness and hospitalization, especially among older adults and individuals at higher risk. Flu activity across Ontario is increasing earlier than usual this year, so residents are encouraged to get vaccinated as soon as eligible. Vaccination remains one of the most effective ways to protect yourself and others during the fall and winter months.

"As we head into fall, respiratory viruses begin circulating more widely in our communities," says Dr. Jason Morgenstern, Medical Officer of Health at RCDHU. "Getting vaccinated before respiratory illness season reaches its peak can help provide protection when you need it most and reduce the risk of serious illness, especially for those at higher risk."

Beginning the week of October 13, COVID-19 and flu vaccines will be available for high-risk and priority populations. Beginning October 26, 2026, vaccination will be open to all individuals six months of age and older who live, work or attend school in Ontario.

Where to Get Vaccinated

Pharmacies: Pharmacies are a primary way to access COVID-19 and flu vaccines for residents age 2 and older. Residents are encouraged to contact their local participating pharmacies for information on vaccine availability and booking an appointment. For a list of local participating pharmacies, visit: [Participating Pharmacies: COVID-19 and Flu Vaccines](#).

Your Health Care Provider: Residents are also encouraged to contact their health care provider to get COVID-19 and flu vaccinations.

RSV and pneumococcal vaccines may also be available through health care providers, for eligible older adults.

RCDHU Fall Community Clinics:

RCDHU will offer fall community clinics throughout Renfrew County and District where eligible residents can receive flu, COVID-19 and RSV vaccines. New this year, pneumococcal vaccines will also be available at these clinics for eligible residents.

Beginning October 13, 2026, RCDHU will offer clinics for **high-risk and priority populations**. To find out who can receive each vaccine, see the following resources:

- [COVID-19: High-risk and priority eligibility](#)
- [Flu: High-risk eligibility](#)
- [RSV & Pneumococcal eligibility \(older adults\)](#)

Beginning October 26, 2026, RCDHU clinics will expand to all individuals aged 6 months and older. RSV and pneumococcal vaccines will continue to be available to those who meet their specific eligibility criteria.

Booking a Clinic Appointment:

Individuals planning to attend an RCDHU clinic are encouraged to book an appointment in advance. Walk-in appointments will be accommodated as space allows. To book an appointment:

- Visit RCDHU's [Online Appointment Booking](#) page, or
- Contact RCDHU at 613-732-9436 or 1-833-773-0004

Additional information about RCDHU fall community clinics, including clinic dates and locations, vaccine eligibility, and appointment booking, is available at: [Fall Vaccine Clinics](#).