

Pharmacy vaccinations open for 55+

York Region residents born in or before 1966 can now book vaccine appointments at several area pharmacies, including four locations in Aurora.

On April 1, select pharmacies in York Region began administering the AstraZeneca vaccine to the 55+.

In order to do so, the Region received approximately 58,000 vaccines from the Province which was subsequently distributed to 37 pharmacies.

Eligible York Region residents are now able to book the shots through the Province's registration portal at [Ontario.ca/pharmacycovidvaccine](https://ontario.ca/pharmacycovidvaccine).

Participating local pharmacies include the Loblaw Pharmacy at the Real Canadian Superstore at Bayview and St. John's Sideroad, Shoppers Drug Marts at Yonge and Edward (14729 Yonge Street) and Hollandview Trail and Bayview Avenue (446 Hollandview Trail), and the Walmart pharmacy on First Commerce Drive.

All vaccines are available by appointment only.

Beyond the pharmacies, at press time York Region's vaccination efforts are focused on residents aged 65+. In their weekly update, York Region Public Health reiterated their position that the best vaccine is the first one offered to you.

At this time, over 193,000 vaccines have been administered in York Region, said Dr. Richard Gould, Associate Medical Officer of Health for the Region, on Monday. Last week we expanded vaccine appointments to residents aged 65 years and older as vaccine supply increases, more clinic appointments will be released and we will move forward to the next priority groups. I want to assure you the best vaccine you get is the first one offered to you. There is no need to delay or wait for one type of vaccine over another. People who are vaccinated gain protection without ever having to risk the serious consequences of getting sick from exposure to the virus. [On Sunday], we received a new shipment of Moderna vaccine allowing us to begin reopening clinics we had temporarily closed due to the lack of vaccine. This week, a new clinic for residents will open in the Township of King at the Trisan Centre and will begin to mobilize our hotspot strategy for priority areas in the cities of Vaughan and Markham.

I encourage all residents to book their vaccine appointments as soon as they are eligible. It is through vaccination efforts we will be able to make a real difference in controlling the spread of the virus in our communities. The Province-wide shutdown is not the news any of us wanted to hear, but remains a stark reminder of the important role we all play in slowing the spread of COVID-19 in our communities. Through our collective commitment to limit close contacts, support local businesses, and follow public health advice, we will once again bring our case numbers down and allow York Region's aggressive vaccination strategies to take hold across our communities.

By Monday, April 5, Aurora has seen a total of 1,202 confirmed cases of COVID-19. 1,068 cases are now marked as resolved and there have been 42 fatalities.

Of the 92 active cases, 85 are attributed to local transmission or close contact and 7 to workplace cluster. 145 cumulative cases have been tied to variants of concern, with just 21 related to a confirmed lineage.

By Brock Weir Editor/Local Journalism Initiative Reporter