



# CORONAVIRUS COVID-19

MESSAGE FROM DR. GOLDING ON THE COVID-19 VACCINE  
JANUARY 13, 2021

**Dear Matawa community members and families,**

In the last few weeks, we have seen significant movement in our understanding of the COVID-19 vaccines. As of today, here is what we know:

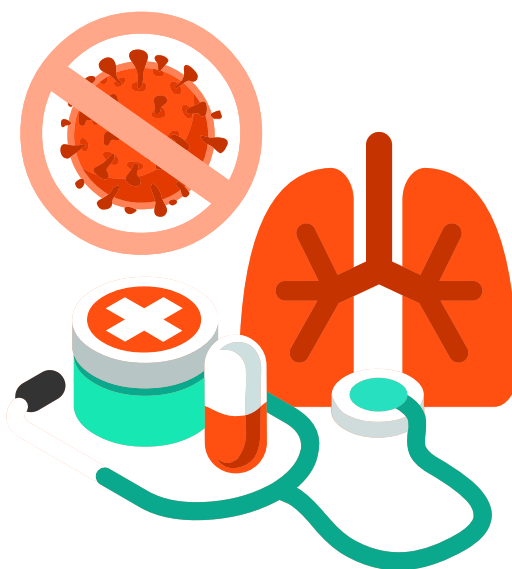
## **The vaccines are safe**

The vaccines approved for use in Canada work by sending a message to our body's immune system to stimulate our natural immune response. Over 70,000 people were involved in the trials of the approved vaccines. The mRNA technology on which the vaccines are built started in the early 1990s, so this science is not actually new to us. As of January, more than 15 million people have been vaccinated worldwide.



## **The vaccines work**

We know the vaccines protect us from getting COVID-19 and getting very sick from COVID-19. A 94 to 95 per cent efficacy level, as seen with the Pfizer-BioNTech and Moderna vaccines, is as good as the results of the best vaccines we have for preventing any disease. People who were vaccinated for the COVID-19 virus were about 20 times less likely to get sick with COVID-19 than those who were not vaccinated. They also likely prevent us from spreading COVID-19 to our loved ones and those around us, although studies are ongoing. This level of efficacy will play a major role in helping slow spread and move us towards a post-pandemic Canada.



Need a COVID-19 test? Reach us from Mon-Fri from 8:30 am – 4:30 pm by calling 1-807-346-2370 or by calling the toll-free Nursing Line at: 1-833-625-3611

**There will be people ahead of us in line, and people behind us**

Ontario's goal is to vaccinate every eligible person by the end of 2021. In general, older adults and others at high risk of getting sick or transmitting the virus will be vaccinated before others. It will take some time to vaccinate enough of our community members and achieve shared protection through herd immunity. During that time, it is crucial that we all continue to follow public health guidance regarding masking and distance, even after we are immunized – until experts say otherwise.



**The pandemic is evolving, which emphasizes the need to maintain measures**

There is also concerning news. Cases and hospitalizations from COVID-19 are rapidly rising throughout Ontario. There is a new strain of COVID-19 found in the United Kingdom, which is thought to be significantly more transmissible. The vaccines are a way out of Ontario's epidemic in the coming months, but they are not the only thing we must do. Despite the vaccine news, the new strain and our case rates: our shared responsibility remains as important as it has ever been. Aside from getting vaccinated when our time comes, we must all still maintain our layers of protection. These layers mean physical distancing, masking at all times, good ventilation, hand hygiene and all of the steps we know work to protect us and our loved ones.



In summary, the vaccines are safe and effective. We will continue to monitor the vaccine landscape and provide you with the most relevant science-based information as soon as we have it available to us.



Wishing you and your loved ones, good health.  
Matawa Health Co-operative