

Important clarification on Alberta Influenza Immunization Program effective date

For the 2020/2021 season, the Alberta Influenza Immunization Program will begin October 19, 2020. Pharmacies cannot offer wide-spread vaccination to the public prior October 19, 2020.

Alberta Blue Cross started accepting claims on October 1, 2020, only to accommodate the Alberta Outreach Program and the unique circumstances where a high-risk individual is not able to wait until the start of the program on October 19, 2020. These should be considered exceptions, not the rule.

Any pharmacies advertising the availability of influenza vaccination should ensure that these materials are consistent with the Alberta Influenza Immunization Program and specify that vaccinations are available beginning October 19, 2020.

The list of conditions that qualify as high-risk are clearly defined within the Alberta Influenza Immunization Program policy available at <https://open.alberta.ca/dataset/alberta-influenza-immunization-policy>

For those pharmacies participating in the Alberta Outreach Program, immunizers can begin to immunize individuals as soon as influenza vaccine is available, which is anticipated by October 13, 2020.

Individuals requesting immunization prior to October 19, 2020, who do not meet the outreach or high-risk criteria can be immunized with privately purchased vaccine, which pharmacies can order appropriately.

For further information, please refer to Benefact 867 and Benefact 890.

Changes to reporting of testing results for COVID-19 asymptomatic tests

Alberta Health Services has recently enhanced their automated processes for informing Albertans about COVID-19 test results. Albertans who are tested for COVID-19 at participating pharmacies can choose to be informed about their COVID-19 test results through either

- an automated call,
- an automated text, or
- a personal phone call from AHS.

Pharmacists can also advise patients that they can quickly access their own test results by signing up for MyHealth Records online at <https://myhealth.alberta.ca/myhealthrecords>.

As a result of these changes, the ACP Council has determined that pharmacists will only be required to communicate all positive test results. The pharmacists are still expected to directly contact the patient to advise them about the result and take appropriate action, including ensuring the patient is referred to the appropriate care. Negative test results are no longer required to be provided directly to the patient by the pharmacist.

The Pharmacy Based Asymptomatic COVID-19 Testing Program documentation has been updated to reflect this change and is posted on the Alberta Blue Cross provider resources section at <https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-resources.php>.

When you have questions:

For assistance with benefit or claim inquiries, please contact an Alberta Blue Cross Pharmacy Services Provider Relations contact centre representative at:

780-498-8370 (Edmonton and area) • 403-294-4041 (Calgary and area) • 1-800-361-9632 (toll free)

FAX 780-498-8406 (Edmonton and area) • FAX 1-877-305-9911 (toll free)

Alberta Blue Cross offers online access to current Pharmacy Benefits and supplemental claiming information to assist with the submission of your direct bill drug claims. Visit [ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php](https://www.ab.bluecross.ca/providers/pharmacy-home.php)

