

COVID-19



Northern Population Health Unit

Weekly Update

LA RONGE

AS OF MARCH 16, 2021

COVID-19 Cases

≤5 New cases in last 7 days	≤5 Recoveries in last 7 days	≤5 Current active cases	173 Total cumulative cases
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Note: To preserve confidentiality, case numbers less than or equal to 5 in any category are reported as ≤5.

Keep yourself and others around you safe!

- Please follow recommended health and safety measures at all times, regardless of the number of known active cases in your community.
- Avoid socializing between different households.
- Do not travel outside your community (including out-of-province) unless essential.

Variants of Concern in Northern Saskatchewan

We have received confirmation that variants of concern have now appeared in northern Saskatchewan. In particular, the B.1.1.7 (UK) variant has been confirmed. This variant spreads more rapidly than the original virus. Because it is so new, doctors and researchers do not yet know if it causes more severe illness or increases the chance of death.

The Moderna vaccine which is being delivered in northern Saskatchewan seems to provide protection against this variant. We will keep communities informed as knowledge around variants increases.

The presence of variants makes it even more important that people follow health precautions. Physical distancing, masking, handwashing and limiting contact outside your household are still the best ways to limit spread.

Booking Vaccination Appointments

As of today, people aged 50 and over in the Northern Administration District can book vaccinations by calling **1-833-SASKVAX (1-833-727-5829)**. You will need to have your first and last name, date of birth, and health card number. You can book for someone else who is eligible, as long as you have their information. For appointments after March 22, people over 70 can also use the [online booking system found here](#).

The phone line is available from 8:00 am to 11:00 pm, 7 days a week.

When you call, you will hear a number of messages regarding the vaccination process. You will then be told your position in line. **If you don't want to wait on the line, you can press 1 and follow the instructions to receive a callback.**

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Vaccine Safety

Public health agencies around the world are actively monitoring immunizations and tracking “adverse events” – any unusual events after vaccination that might be caused by the vaccine or the vaccination process.

The Canadian government collects statistics on adverse events following coronavirus vaccination. Out of over 2 million doses given, they have received fewer than 2000 reports of adverse events. Only 214 of those events were considered serious.

The population of northern Saskatchewan is just under 40,000 people. Assuming we see about the same rate of adverse events as the Canadian population, we would expect to see only 30-40 total adverse events in northern Saskatchewan, and less than five considered serious.

All adverse events are reviewed by the Medical Health Officers to determine whether or not they are related to receiving the vaccine. To date, there have been no vaccine safety issues with the Moderna vaccine identified in Canada.

Vaccination using the Moderna vaccine is continuing across the north. People should be aware that **side effects are more common** after the second dose. **This is a sign that the vaccine is working – your immune system is recognizing and responding to the disease.** However, the side effects of this immune response can be unpleasant, much like a mild cold or flu. Common side effects are:

- Injection site pain (78%)
- fatigue (25%)
- headache (20%)
- muscle aches (18%)
- chills (8%)
- fever (8%)
- joint pain (7%)
- nausea (6%)

These side effects are not considered adverse effects, as they are signs that the immune system is working well. If you or someone you know experiences effects beyond this list after receiving a shot, please contact public health in your community or call 811.

References:

[Health Canada vaccination rates and side effects](#)

[Canada’s Chief Public Health Officer statement regarding adverse effect monitoring](#)

[CDC report – Moderna vaccine side effects](#)



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