

Mature Minor Consent for COVID-19 Immunization

Q: Is parental/guardian consent required for an adolescent to book an appointment for COVID-19 immunization or to receive the COVID-19 vaccine?

Under New Brunswick's [Medical Consent for Minors Act](#), minors who have reached the age of 16 can consent to health care in the same way as if they had reached the age of majority. In N.B., a parent/legal guardian needs to consent to immunization for minors younger than 16.

Like other provinces and territories across Canada, however, the capacity to make a health care decision is not tied strictly to age. There are circumstances in the [Medical Consent of Minors Act](#) that does allow for health care of a minor younger than 16 without the need for a parent/legal guardian's consent. When the opinion of a legally qualified medical practitioner, dentist, nurse practitioner or nurse attending the minor determines that the minor is capable, consent given by a mature minor cannot be overturned by a parent or guardian.

Q: When can a minor give consent?

A minor under the age of 16 is capable of giving consent to be immunized if an attending legally qualified medical practitioner, dentist, nurse practitioner or nurse determines that the minor:

- understands the nature and the consequences of a medical treatment; and
- the medical treatment and the procedure to be used is in the best interests of the minor and the minor's continuing health and well-being.

Q: What is the role of the parent or guardian?

Parents/Guardians have an important role in discussing treatments which affect a minor's health and well-being. It is highly recommended that parents/legal guardians discuss COVID-19 disease and immunization with their children in a loving and caring environment. Information on the COVID-19 disease and available vaccines can be found on the Government of New-Brunswick's COVID-19 vaccine "[Get the Facts](#)" webpage. Children need to know about:

- previous reactions to vaccines they may have had.
- present health conditions, including medications that they are taking and allergies to antibiotics or components of the vaccine.
- their parents'/guardians' views on health and immunization.

When a child is sufficiently mature to be considered competent to make a medical decision and the parent/guardian refuses consent, the child can choose to be vaccinated.