

There's still time to get your shot!

This week I sat with my family, on a patio not my own, and had dinner. Later in the week we visited friends on their deck and chatted with a glass of wine. It felt wonderful. While there is still some anxiety about being out and about after all these months, there was a sense of relief that we were finally able to return to some of our normal social activities.

Our community has done a fantastic job. By following public health's guidance, we have successfully limited the spread of the virus locally, saving many lives by doing so. We have worked hard to get vaccines into many arms, allowing us to safely ease restrictions. It is our discipline, determination and community spirit which has gotten us here. We can now visit family and friends, shop for non-essential items and gather in worship or just friendship without the ever-present fear of infection. Soon, our US friends and relatives will be arriving, and we will also be heading across the border ourselves. But while we were all hoping, finally, to be done with COVID, it appears, that this virus is still not done with us.

The newest variant of concern, now called Delta, is again threatening our wellbeing, and causing rumblings of a possible fourth wave. This time, however, it does not have to happen. Vaccinations helped get us out of our third lockdown and vaccinations, along with modified social distancing and masking could prevent a fourth. Even Delta can be stopped by 2 doses of our COVID vaccines in most cases, although 1 shot is much less effective with this variant. Unfortunately, vaccination rates are leveling off while the threat of rising cases looms. Only 60 % of those over 12 in our region are fully vaccinated. We need only look to other countries like the US or England, to see the effects of remaining un or partially vaccinated. With those under 12 still not eligible to be vaccinated, we are a long way from the herd immunity that we need to prevent further disruption to our community.

Despite our fatigue and desire to forget about COVID, we need to continue the push to get needles into arms. Make getting your vaccine a priority for your own safety and that of your community. If you have been vaccinated, please talk about your experiences to others who are hesitant or nervous. Share your tips and suggestions for managing your own anxieties. Let your friends and neighbours know that they can now walk into any vaccination clinic and get their shots – no waiting and no appointments needed. If you know someone who is having trouble getting to a clinic, offer to take them. Any other ideas or suggestions – please share them with us and others.

If you are worried or still have questions, please stop in at the vaccination clinic, we always have someone available to talk, even if you are not yet ready to get your shot.

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