

In some provinces people with a Body Mass Index (BMI) >40 have been prioritized for the 2nd phase of the province's COVID-19 vaccine rollout beginning in April.<sup>1</sup>



**The World Health Organization has identified obesity as a risk for becoming severely ill from COVID-19.<sup>2</sup>**

Having obesity may triple the risk of hospitalization, increase the risk of death, and make the effects of COVID-19 much worse.<sup>3</sup>

It is estimated that more than eight million Canadians could be living with obesity,<sup>4</sup> and could be at risk for developing a more severe illness from COVID-19.

*Obesity is defined as excess or abnormal body fat that impairs health. BMI is just part of the definition, not the whole picture.*



**Obesity is a treatable chronic disease** caused by many factors including environment, genes, emotional health, lack of sleep, and more.<sup>5</sup> Successful treatment is not just a matter of eating less and moving more. Just like diabetes and heart disease, obesity needs proper treatment and care.

**Treating obesity is about improving health, not weight loss.**  
**Vaccine prioritization for people with obesity is a positive step forward and an effective tool in our COVID-19 vaccine strategy.**  
**We encourage people living with obesity to ask their healthcare provider for more information.**

