HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

HEALTHINFO

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# Communiqué

## What is an Adverse Event Following Immunization (AEFI)?

An AEFI is any untoward medical occurrence in a client which follows immunization and which does not necessarily have a causal relationship with the administration of the vaccine. The adverse event may be any unfavourable and/or unintended sign, abnormal laboratory finding, symptom or disease.

## What type of AEFI should be reported?

AEFIs should be reported when the event:

- **Has a temporal association with a vaccine.**
- **Has no other clear cause at the time of reporting:** A causal relationship between immunization and the event that follows does not need to be proven and submitting a report does not imply or establish causality. Sometimes the client's medical history, recent disease, concurrent illness/condition and/or concomitant medication(s) can explain the event(s).

Of particular interest are those AEFIs which meet one or more of the following criteria:

- **Are of serious nature:** A serious adverse event is one that is life threatening or results in death, requires hospitalization or prolongation of an existing hospitalization, results in residual disability or causes congenital malformation.
- **Require urgent medical attention.**
- **Are unusual or unexpected:** An event that has either not been identified previously or one that has been identified previously but is, at current, being reported at an increased frequency. For additional information regarding unusual or unexpected events, please refer to the Canadian Immunization Guide which can be accessed on-line at: http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/index-eng.php.

If there is any doubt as to whether or not an event should be reported, a conservative approach should be taken and the event should be reported.

## Who reports AEFIs?

AEFI reports originate from multiple sources in Canada. Vaccine manufacturers are required by law (Food and Drugs Act and Regulations) to report to Public Health Agency Canada all serious AEFIs with vaccines for which they are the Market Authorization Holder within 15 days of knowledge of their occurrence. No other legal requirement for reporting AEFIs exists nationally. Several provinces, including Ontario, have enacted mandatory AEFI reporting requirements. However, overall, reports are generally submitted on a voluntary basis by vaccine providers and other health care professionals.

The usual and preferred reporting flow is from local or regional health units to central provincial/territorial immunization programs. Reports are forwarded to PHAC electronically, or in hard copy by the provinces and territories after all personal identifying information has been removed. On occasion, reports may be submitted directly to PHAC by travel health clinics, pharmacists, physicians or the general public.

## How is Privacy and Confidentiality of information ensured?

Personal health information is confidential. All provinces, territories and PHAC take great care to protect personal health information. Health care workers are encouraged to discuss with clients, or the clients' caregiver, the reason for reporting the AEFI and the confidentiality of all collected information. For further information regarding the protection of personal health information you may contact the privacy representatives at your local public health office. Alternatively, the Privacy Act can be accessed online at the following address: http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/p-21/index.html

## Where and when can copies of the AEFI report form be obtained?

The form itself, along with information regarding its implementation in Canada, will be published on the Web http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/pdf/hc4229e.pdf . In addition, the form can be viewed in the Compendium of Pharmaceuticals and Specialties and hard copies can be obtained from local public health units, hospitals, clinics (including travel clinics), etc.

Reference: Public Health Agency of Canada User Guide: Report of Adverse Events Following Immunization (AEFI) Modified 2010-10-04

# Thinking of Giving Your Patient a Tetanus Booster??

In 2011, Ontario expanded its publicly funded routine Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis) immunization program to offer all adults 19-64 years of age, who have not received an adolescent booster dose, one lifetime dose of Tdap vaccine. The lifetime dose will replace one of the Td (tetanus, diphtheria) booster doses given every ten years.

**Tdap** is currently publicly funded for adolescents 14 – 16 years of age.

**Adacel®** is indicated for persons 4 to 64 years of age.

**Boostrix®** is indicated for persons 4 years and onwards, except it is publicly funded for adults 19 to 64 years of age.

| | Tdap (Adacel® or Boostrix®) | Td |
|---|---|---|
| Adolescents 14 – 16 years | ✓ | Every ten years thereafter |
| Adults 19 to 64 years | ✓ | Every ten years thereafter |

## Maintaining Vaccine Potency and Minimizing Wastage

There are several key steps to ensuring that potent vaccines are administered to vaccine recipients:

- Monitor and document refrigerator temperatures twice daily (including the time the temperature was taken)
- Call your local health unit immediately to report vaccines that have been exposed to temperatures below +2° C or above +8° C.
- Never administer or discard vaccine until your local public health unit has assessed the situation.
- Spoiled or expired vaccine should always be returned to your source of supply (i.e., local public health unit). **Please LABEL package contents with facility name so we can identify the source of return.**

## How to Transport Vaccines Outside of the Office Setting

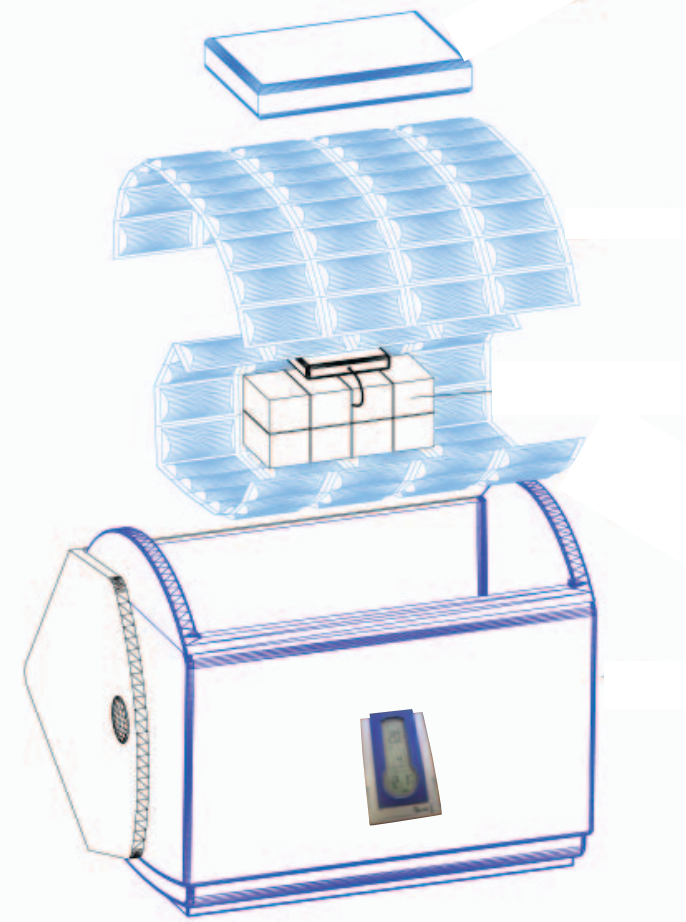
- Vaccines must be transported in insulated and monitored containers (coolers) so that they stay between +2° C and +8° C. An insulated vaccine cooler with conditioned coolant packs and a thermometer is required to pick up vaccine from the local public health unit and transport them to the office/facility. A vaccine cooler is also required to transport vaccines from the office/facility to another location.
- Vaccine must be protected from heat, cold, sunlight and fluorescent light at all times.

An insulated container/cooler (which maintains the internal temperature within the +2° C and +8° C range with coolant packs) is used for:

- Transporting vaccine
- Temporary storage of vaccine during equipment maintenance periods (e.g., when cleaning or defrosting refrigerator)
- Emergency storage of vaccine (e.g., refrigerator malfunction or electricity disruption)

Vaccines must never be transported in the trunk of a car due to the risk of exposure to temperature extremes.

Reference: Ministry of Health and Long Term Care Vaccine Storage and Handling Guidelines (Jan. 2006)



# Schedule for High School Adacel (Tdap) Vaccine Clinics

This is a "heads up" in anticipation of the added volume of calls the doctor's offices are likely to receive as a result of the health unit's upcoming enforcement of secondary school suspension for students who do not have up-to-date immunization status for tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. The health unit plans to enforce the suspension process under the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA), which requires children in school to complete the prescribed program of immunization in relation to each of the designated diseases (tetanus, diphtheria, polio, measles, mumps and rubella).

Notices and consents will be sent out to each of the secondary school students who are eligible for the ten year booster, Adacel® (Tdap) vaccine. The calls offices are likely to receive will be from students/parents wanting to verify receipt of the vaccine you have administered or to book an appointment to receive a vaccine. The Health Unit will be providing clinics in each of the ten area high schools during school hours on the following dates (see following schedule). Also, the week before and the week suspensions start, we will be offering additional catch up clinics at both the Caledonia and Simcoe Health Unit locations. These clinics will run concurrently on April 19, 20 and 23, 2012. For those students who do not have up-to-date status or have not provided an exemption affidavit, suspensions are slated to begin on April 23. As always, the focus of the Health Unit is not on suspensions, but rather to promote uptake of the vaccine to those at risk students. We appreciate your cooperation and partnership in this endeavour. The Health Unit has an ample supply of the Adacel® vaccine if you need to order any.

If you have any questions, please contact a member of the Vaccine Preventable Disease Team at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623.

# Secondary School Immunization (Adacel) Clinics and Suspension Notices

## Schedule of High School Adacel (Tdap) Vaccine Clinics

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|---|---|
| Tuesday, February 21 | 9:00 a.m. - DELHI DISTRICT SECONDARY SCHOOL<br>1:00 p.m. - VALLEY HEIGHTS SECONDARY SCHOOL |
| Wednesday, February 22 | 9:00 a.m. - DUNNVILLE SECONDARY SCHOOL |
| Thursday, February 23 | 9:00 a.m. - SIMCOE COMPOSITE SCHOOL<br>1:00 p.m. - PORT DOVER COMPOSITE SCHOOL |
| Monday, February 27 | 9:00 a.m. - HOLY TRINITY CATHOLIC HIGH SCHOOL |
| Tuesday, February 28 | 9:00 a.m. - MCKINNON PARK SECONDARY SCHOOL |
| Wednesday, February 29 | 9:00 a.m. - HAGERSVILLE SECONDARY SCHOOL<br>1:00 p.m. - WATERFORD DISTRICT HIGH SCHOOL |
| Thursday, March 1 | 9:00 a.m. - CAYUGA SECONDARY SCHOOL |

*Communiqué is a newsletter distributed by the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit for those who work in the area of Vaccines and Vaccine Preventable Diseases. If you have ideas or suggestions of topics for future Communiqués, please contact the Health Unit.*

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