



VOLUME #4

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HALDIMAND-NORFOLK HEALTH UNIT

# NURSES' notes

## Provincial Pertussis Outbreak

Currently Haldimand-Norfolk is part of a provincial outbreak of Pertussis within the Mexican Mennonite Community. This community is known to be under immunized which increases the risk for transmission, therefore it is essential for those who are symptomatic and/or exposed to be properly tested and treated.

Public Health Ontario recommends anyone who has known or suspected exposure as well as those who are symptomatic to have an Nasopharyngeal swab obtained. As NP swabs are the preferred testing method for Pertussis.

If you have any clients within the office who you are suspecting, testing and/or treating for pertussis, please ensure you report these cases to the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit.



## World Tuberculosis (TB) Day

March 24th marks World TB Day annually; this day is focused on building public awareness that tuberculosis today remains an epidemic in much of the world, causing the deaths of several million people each year. This day commemorates the day in 1882 when Dr. Robert Koch amazed the scientific community by announcing he had discovered the cause of tuberculosis, TB bacillus.



Locally we continue to see cases of Tuberculosis, some active, most latent TB infection and others who have recently immigrated. Therefore, we all need to continue working together as a community to assist with the world goal, eliminate TB. Please remember to notify public health with positive TST (skin test) reports, as well as any suspected TB cases seen. We thank you all for your ongoing cooperation and efforts with us!

# Chlamydia and Gonorrhea Treatment



The Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit offers free prepackaged treatment for those individuals who present themselves at the office symptomatic and/or have known exposure to an STI. This medication is free and easy to order through your vaccine order form, it is located at the bottom of the list.

When clients do NOT take the medication in your presence, please remind them:

- Azithromycin 1 gram (4 pink pills) MUST be taken ALL together, they should not be taken on an empty stomach

- Cefexime (Suprax) 800mg (2 white pills) MUST be taken at the same time, again not on an empty stomach
- If they are given both treatments, they can be taken at separate times, it is just essential that they receive the full dose of each treatment, rather than spreading it out over days.

Any questions/concerns please contact myself, Stacey Guthrie at 519-426-6170 Ext. 3270

## The 5 W's of Needlestick Injuries and How to Prevent them

### Who

Health care workers, especially nurses

### What

Needlestick injuries are wounds caused by needles that accidentally puncture the skin. Needlestick injuries can potentially transmit infectious disease, particularly blood borne viruses such as HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis B virus and Hepatitis C virus.

### When

Anytime you are handling sharps

### Where

Anywhere in your work environment where there are sharps being handled and discarded

### Why

Many reasons, some controllable while others are not. Some examples

- Recapping used needles

- Sharps containers that are too full
- Time pressures

### How to Prevent Needlestick Injuries

Prevention of needlestick injuries is the most effective way to protect workers from the infectious diseases that can be transmitted through percutaneous exposures. Awareness is essential, nurses need to be aware of their risks and how to prevent them. They need to know how to properly use, assemble, disassemble and dispose of needles.

Working in such high risk professions, it is recommended health care workers are vaccinated against Hepatitis B Virus.

Never recap a used needle

Use safety engineered needles, if possible

Ensure there is a sharps container with you while you are dealing with sharps that require to be properly discarded following

use.

Ensure the sharps containers within your work environment are monitored routinely and replaced when they are full.

If you are exposed, be sure to report the incident immediately and follow your office's procedure. It is recommended that the puncture site should be washed, contained and then you should seek medical attention for lab testing and counseling.

Reference Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety from [http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/diseases/needlestick\\_injuries.html](http://www.ccohs.ca/oshanswers/diseases/needlestick_injuries.html)