



Communiqué

Included in this communiqué is the new and updated Publically Funded Immunization Schedule.

You can visit our website at www.hnhu.org to download any additional copies.

Adverse Events Following Immunization

An adverse event following immunization (AEFI) is an unwanted or unexpected health effect that happens after someone receives a vaccine, which may or may not be caused by the vaccine.

Monitoring of adverse events is essential to vaccine safety in Ontario. All vaccines are extensively tested before use and are monitored for safety and effectiveness. By reporting adverse events, possible vaccine safety issues can be detected early to lessen health effects on those who need vaccines.

Report adverse events to public health using www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Report_Adverse_Event_Following_Immunization_Form_fillable_2013.pdf

Updates to Immunization of Schools Pupils Act

To improve the health and safety of all children, the government of Ontario has added three more vaccines required for school attendance. As of July 2014, students are required by law to be immunized against the following diseases;

- Meningococcal disease
- Varicella
- Whooping cough

These are addition to the previously required immunizations against:

- Diphtheria
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Measles
- Polio
- Tetanus

Proof of immunization is required to attend school.

Vaccines required for school attendance are routinely administered by health care providers and can be ordered as per existing processes for ordering publicly funded vaccines.

The exception is Menactra, which protects against meningococcal disease strains ACYW-135. This vaccine is only provided to students in grade seven through the school-based immunization clinics and

through the Haldimand Norfolk Health Unit monthly clinics. Health care providers can still order Menactra for high risk conditions such as cochlear implant recipients, all persons with functional or anatomic asplenia, and all persons with complement, properdin, factor D deficiency or primary antibody deficiencies. You may place this order by identifying on the bottom of your order sheet clients initials, date of birth and reason for order.

Panorama

Panorama is a provincial e-Health initiative currently for public health professionals. The aim is to allow practitioners from all Ontario public health units to more efficiently manage immunization information, vaccine inventory, and communicable disease outbreaks. It allows for increased integration between public health units, the Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care, Ontario Government Pharmacy and Medical Supply Service, and Public Health Ontario.

Currently, two modules of the Panorama system have gone live in the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit (and across most of Ontario):

1. **The Immunization Module** – allows tracking of client immunizations received through public health (school, clinic or community settings). Vaccinations listed on the Monthly Antigen Sheet that physicians return to the Health Unit are inputted into this program, as well as any vaccines reported by parents/caregivers. Day care attendees and student records are maintained through this module as per the Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA). In addition, vaccine refusals or medical exemptions are tracked through this program. These records can be accessed by public health practitioners across the province, streamlining the process of health record-keeping if clients relocate. It also reduces the likelihood of over-vaccination.
2. **The Vaccine Inventory Module** – manages the ordering, returns, and distribution of publicly-funded vaccines from the Ontario Government Pharmacy in Toronto. Local health care providers order and return vaccines through the Haldimand-Norfolk Health Unit, which are processed through this module. This inventory will allow for greater accountability for both health care providers and the health units, as well as improves supply chain management resulting in cost savings.

Be aware that there will be changes to the ordering/return process of vaccines due to Panorama, and that we will communicate these changes to you in a timely manner. Please continue to report client immunizations to the Health Unit to assist us in maintaining accurate client health records.

Cold chain

What is the cold chain?

“Cold chain” refers to the process used to maintain optimal temperatures between 2°C and 8°C during the transport, storage and handling of vaccines, it begins with the manufacturer, and end with the administration of the vaccine to the client.

Importance of the Cold Chain

Vaccines are sensitive biological products that may become less effective or even destroyed when exposed to temperatures outside the recommended range. Cold sensitive vaccines experience an immediate loss of potency following freezing. Repetitive exposure to heat episodes results in a cumulative loss of potency that is not reversible.

Temperatures falling outside the recommended range require immediate action to avoid loss of product. Notify a member of our Vaccine Preventable Disease Program at the Health Unit at 519-426-6170 or 905-318-6623. We will consult with you regarding the vaccines involved, the duration of and the temperatures reached during the exposure. Do not remove any vaccines from the fridge until you have contacted a member of the Health Unit from the Vaccine Preventable Disease Program.

Transporting the Vaccine

Research has shown that a properly packed cooler for transporting vaccine can safely maintain cold chain for 1 ½ hours during transport.

Precondition

- The cooler: Place three frozen gel packs inside the cooler for 20 minutes prior to leaving the office.
- The flexible insulating blankets: Place in the refrigerator for at least two hours prior to use. Many offices store them in the fridges.
- The minimum-maximum thermometer. Place in the refrigerator for at least two hours prior to use.
 1. When picking up vaccine at the Health Unit the minimum-maximum probe must be placed inside the cooler with the vaccine and the display must be visible on the outside of the cooler. The vaccine is then wrapped on the bottom in a flexible, insulating blanket.
 2. The second insulating blanket is then placed on top of the vaccine.

A frozen gel pack should be placed on top of the insulating blanket for outdoor temperatures over 38°C.

Vaccine Refrigerator

Vaccine should be stored in the middle of the refrigerator away from the coils, walls, floors and cold-air vent. Vaccine should never be stored in the vegetable bins or in the refrigerator door as these locations are subject to temperature fluctuations.

Minimum and Maximum Thermometers

It is important to manually reset the thermometer by pressing the “RESET” button each time the temperatures are recorded. The minimum/maximum and current temperatures must be recorded twice daily-usually first thing in the morning and at the end of the day.

Communique 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

