

ONTARIO'S GRADE 7 SCHOOL IMMUNIZATION PROGRAM

CHECKLIST FOR PARENTS



Nurses from your local public health unit will be visiting your child's school to provide vaccinations for students in Grade 7. These vaccines are free for eligible students and protect against the following serious diseases:

HEPATITIS B

Hepatitis B is caused by a virus that attacks the liver. It is one of the most common causes of liver cancer around the world.

- ✓ **Hepatitis B vaccine:** The hepatitis B vaccine is between 95 per cent and 100 per cent effective when children receive two doses. The first dose is given in the fall and the second dose four to six months later.

HUMAN PAPILLOMAVIRUS (HPV)

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is very common around the world. HPV can cause cervical or penile cancer, and other cancers in men and women.

- ✓ **HPV vaccine:** Infections from the most common types of HPV can be prevented by vaccination. For the majority of students, two doses of HPV vaccine are recommended. The first dose will be given in the fall and the second dose six months later.

MENINGOCOCCAL DISEASE

Meningococcal disease is a serious bacterial infection. Without treatment, children who get it may die or have long-term disabilities such as brain injury, loss of limbs or deafness.

- ✓ **Meningococcal vaccine:** In Ontario, children receive a meningococcal vaccine at age one and again in Grade 7. These meningococcal vaccines are required for children to attend school in Ontario, unless they have a valid exemption.

HOW DOES THE SCHOOL PROGRAM WORK?

- ✔ Sign and return the consent form before the clinic day.
- ✔ Talk to your child about what to expect at the clinic and ways to reduce pain. The clinic nurse will use different strategies to minimize any discomfort, like distracting your child and asking your child to relax their arm. If necessary, ask your public health unit about tips such as using a topical anesthetic (medication that numbs the skin).
- ✔ It's possible that your child may receive up to three separate shots, one for each vaccine, during a clinic.
- ✔ Your child will receive the vaccines in the upper arms. On clinic days, they should wear clothes that will allow easy access. The nurse will ask your child some questions about his or her health prior to vaccination.
- ✔ Your child will get a record of immunization after the vaccines; keep this record with their "Yellow Card", as it may be required for school, work or travel.
- ✔ If your child is absent on the day of the vaccine clinic, contact your local public health unit to make other arrangements.

Sometimes there are minor side effects, such as pain, swelling or redness in the arm. This is normal and does not last very long. If you notice any change in your child's health that concerns you, contact your health care provider or local public health unit.

IS IT SAFE FOR MY CHILD TO GET MORE THAN ONE VACCINE AT A TIME?

Research shows that your child's immune system can easily handle more than one vaccine at a time, and multiple vaccines have been shown to be very safe. Children do not experience increased side effects when more than one vaccine is given at a time. These vaccines have been shown to be as effective together as they are individually. When offered at school, this means fewer clinic visits for vaccinations, which saves time and offers convenience for families.

Vaccination is the best way to protect children from serious diseases. For more information about the vaccines that are given in Grade 7, the diseases they prevent, and tips to prepare your child for these vaccines, visit Ontario.ca/vaccines. You can also speak with your health care provider, or your local public health unit. Contact information for your local public health unit is on your child's consent form or can be found at: <http://www.phdapps.health.gov.on.ca/phulocator/>.

