

SUBJECT: Ontario Rotavirus Immunization Program – Transitioning to Rotarix®
Date: July 27, 2021
Pages: 2
To: Primary Care Providers
From: Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health

Starting on August 1, 2021, the publicly-funded rotavirus immunization program will transition to the monovalent rotavirus vaccine, Rotarix® (Rot-1) instead of the pentavalent vaccine, RotaTeq® (Rot-5).

For infants born on or after June 1, 2021 (due for their first dose in August 2021 or later):

- Initiate the vaccine series with Rotarix® (Rot-1).
- Ideally, infants should start and complete their series with the same product, whenever possible.

For infants born on or prior to May 31, 2021 (due for their first dose prior to August) or who have already begun a series with RotaTeq® (Rot-5):

- Complete the series using RotaTeq® (Rot-5), whenever possible.
- If RotaTeq® is not available when the infant is due for a second or third dose, Rotarix® (Rot-1) may be used instead. **A total of three doses should still be provided.**

Background

Ontario is transitioning between rotavirus vaccine products as a result of the federally coordinated vaccine purchasing program. The National Advisory Committee on Immunization recommends routine infant rotavirus vaccination with either of the rotavirus vaccine products. They do not preferentially recommend one product over the other.¹

Please note that the two products differ in their authorized schedules. Additional details are provided in the table below.

	RotaTeq® (Rot-5) <i>(Current program)</i>	Rotarix® (Rot-1) <i>(Beginning August 1, 2021)</i>
Type	Live, attenuated	
Route	Oral (PO)	
Dosage/ Composition	2.0 mL suspension provided in a single-dose oral applicator or tube	1.5 mL suspension provided in a single-dose oral applicator or tube
Schedule	3 doses (2, 4, 6 mo)	2 doses (2, 4 mo)
Contraindications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Severe combined immunodeficiency (SCID) • Previous history of intussusception • Uncorrected congenital malformation of the gastrointestinal tract (such as Meckel’s diverticulum) that would predispose for intussusception • History of anaphylaxis after previous administration of the vaccine • Proven immediate or anaphylactic hypersensitivity to any component of the vaccine or its container. 	

For complete information, refer to product monograph.

WDG Public Health Physician Update

Ontario Rotavirus Immunization Program – Transitioning to Rotarix®

July 27, 2021

Page 2 of 2

For answers to additional questions, please refer to the attached information sheet from the Ministry of Health.

Vaccine Ordering

Please continue to order rotavirus vaccine as you have done in the past. WDGPH will be filling your orders with RotaTeq® (Rot-5) until the supply runs out. Your first order that is filled with Rotarix® (Rot-1) will be flagged for you.

References:

1. Government of Canada. Rotavirus vaccine: Canadian Immunization Guide. Nov 01, 2019. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/page-19-rotavirus-vaccine.html>

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