
SUBJECT: Students with Incomplete Immunization Records
Date: November 16, 2023
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To: Primary Care Physicians
From: Dr. Matthew Tenenbaum, Associate Medical Officer of Health

In order to attend school, the *Immunization of School Pupils Act, 1990 (ISPA)*, requires students be vaccinated against the following diseases:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio
- Pertussis
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Measles
- Meningococcal disease
- Varicella (born 2010 or later)

Each year, Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph Public Health (WDGPH) reviews student immunization records and notifies parents/guardians and students if their vaccinations are overdue. At this time, approximately 12,000 elementary and high school students across Wellington-Dufferin-Guelph are overdue for required vaccines, according to WDGPH records. Students who have not received all required vaccines may be suspended from school.

Notification for Missing Vaccines

All parents/guardians in the WDGPH area will be notified if their child(ren) are overdue for doses of vaccines that are required under the *ISPA* to attend school. Immunization notices will start to be mailed to high school students in November, followed by elementary students in January. This notification will provide information on what vaccine(s) are missing and the steps that families can take to get immunized, submit vaccine records to WDGPH, or obtain a valid exemption.

This notification will also include information on missing doses of Hepatitis B (HB), Human Papillomavirus (HPV) and Varicella vaccine (if born before 2010). Both HPV and HB vaccine are free until the end of Grade 12, after that the HPV vaccine costs \$600 and the HB vaccine costs \$150 to complete the series.

Please refer to [Ontario's Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule](#) for guidance about routine and catch-up immunizations.

Options for Students to get Immunized

WDGPH is currently providing school-based clinics in all elementary schools to offer vaccines under the grade 7 immunization program for HB, HPV and Meningococcal disease. High School clinics will be starting in December 2023 and will offer all vaccines required to attend school as well as the HB, HPV, or varicella vaccine. All routine vaccines are also offered in all three public health offices. More information can be found [on our website](#).

Students may also present at their primary care practitioner's office with an immunization notice for required and recommended vaccines.

Ordering Vaccine

To order more vaccine for your office please use the [WDG Public Health Vaccine Portal](#) OR [visit our website](#) to complete a vaccine order form and fax to 519-823-4903.

Reporting Vaccinations to Public Health

- For Health Care Providers: If you provide childhood vaccines (ages 0-18), your office can report them to WDGPH. Fax vaccine records to 519-836-2986.
- For Parents: Parents can report immunizations directly to WDGPH using one of the following options:
 - Online: immunizewdg.ca
 - Email: school.vaccines@wdgpublichealth.ca
 - Phone: 1-800-265-7293 ext. 7006
 - Mail: Vaccine Records, 160 Chancellors Way, Guelph, ON N1G 0E1

Exemptions

Children who cannot be immunized for medical reasons need to have a [Statement of Medical Exemption](#) completed by their physician and submitted to Public Health. If parents are choosing not to immunize children for religious or conscientious reasons, there are other steps that they need to follow. For more information on exemptions, please refer to the [WDGPH website](#).

Routine Immunizations and the COVID-19 Vaccine

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) recommends that the COVID-19 vaccine may be given concomitantly with, or at any time before or after, other vaccines¹. The risk of vaccine preventable diseases outweighs the risk of rare adverse events following immunization and delayed vaccine doses should be offered at the earliest opportunity.² If a child is overdue for a COVID-19 vaccine dose, please consider offering this at the same visit.

References:

1. Canadian Immunization Guide (December 2022). COVID-19 vaccine: Canadian Immunization Guide. Available at: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/page-26-covid-19-vaccine.html>
2. Centre for Vaccine Preventable Diseases. Maintaining Immunization for School-Aged Children During COVID-19: Expert and Stakeholders Roundtable Report, September 2021. Available at: <https://www.dlsph.utoronto.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/09/Maintaining-Immunizations-for-School-Age-Children-During-COVID-19-Report-1.pdf>

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