



Immunization and Immunosuppression

Immunization in patients who are undergoing immunotherapy should be considered, whenever possible, prior to starting treatment. The varying degree of immunodeficiency will influence which vaccines can and should be administered. Ontario funds some but not all of these vaccines. The Canadian Immunization Guide, now available online at www.healthycanadians.gc.ca (search [Canadian Immunization Guide](#)) is a good place to start as Chapter 3, last updated in November 2016, addresses immunosuppression, and Chapter 4 provides vaccine-specific information.

Live vaccines should always be discussed with the most responsible physician, as their safety will depend on the degree of immunosuppression. In addition to the patient, it is important to address immunization of close and household contacts. Each influenza season, we attempt to do this, essentially using “ring” vaccination, as we do in rabies, by creating a fire wall of immunity around the person we are trying to protect.

As this topic was addressed just recently at Grand Rounds, here are a few quick tips on specific vaccines:

1. Herpes Zoster Vaccine:

- Recommendation: This vaccine could be considered for anyone 50 years or over who is anticipating initiation of immunosuppressive therapy but its safety and efficacy is an area of ongoing research.
- Publicly-Funded: Zostavax vaccine is publicly funded for those 65 years to 70 years inclusive.

2. Haemophilis Influenzae B (HiB):

- Recommendation: Previously unimmunized adults can receive this vaccine (Act-HiB).
- Publicly-Funded: Those who meet the publicly-funded high-risk eligibility criteria can receive it free of charge. The high-risk eligibility includes individuals with asplenia, bone marrow or solid organ transplant recipients, cochlear implant recipients, hematopoietic stem cell transplant recipients, immunocompromised individuals, lung transplant recipients, and/or primary antibody deficiencies.

3. Meningococcal Disease:

- Recommendation: Both a quadrivalent conjugate and polysaccharide meningococcal vaccine (Men-ACYW) are available for use, as well as the 4CMenB vaccine. These could be indicated depending on immunization history and risk. Please refer to the [Canadian Immunization Guide](#).
- Publicly-funded: In Ontario, Men-C-ACYW is free for persons with acquired complement deficiency (e.g. receiving eculizumab), asplenia, cochlear implant recipients, persons with HIV, and those with complement, properdin, Factor D or primary antibody deficiencies if they are 9 months to 55 years inclusive. The 4CMenB vaccine is only free to these high risk groups if they are between the ages of 2 months to 17 years inclusive. The polysaccharide quadrivalent vaccine is free for those > 56 years, but only as a single booster dose 5 years after the conjugate has been given.

4. Pneumococcal Disease:

- Recommendation: Both the Prevnar 13 (Pneu-C-13) and the polysaccharide vaccine (Pneu-P-23) are recommended, depending on the age of the patient and previous immunization history.
- Publicly-funded: These are both publicly funded for people with immunosuppression. Doses depend on the underlying disease. Please refer to the Publicly-funded schedule for Ontario (December 2016) for ages and high-risk eligibility criteria.

Please call Peterborough Public Health if you require assistance in determining eligibility for publicly funded vaccines.

View the **FYI Newsletter** online at
www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca under
For Professionals | Health Professionals |
FYI Newsletter

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GUEST POST: **Vaccine Safety, Protecting our Families from Infectious Disease and Misinformation**

by Dr. Shelley Deeks, Public Health Ontario

Vaccination is one of the greatest achievements in the history of public health. Vaccines protect the lives of millions of Ontarians, with nine million vaccine doses safely administered each year.

Despite this, misinformation about vaccine safety is still a problem in Ontario and throughout the world. Misinformation on vaccines can have a major influence on policy makers as well as parents. In recent years, vaccine safety has been subject to close media scrutiny and intense public debate. An example occurred in early 2015, when a media outlet reported a controversial story on HPV vaccine with the headline "A wonder drug's dark side". After backlash from the public health and scientific community, the story was removed from their website, as it "led to confusion between anecdotes and evidence". There continues to be debate in the public realm despite a wealth of scientific evidence demonstrating that vaccines, including HPV vaccines, are safe. Enhanced communication about vaccine safety is needed to combat misinformation to ensure Ontarians are protected from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Since Public Health Ontario began monitoring vaccine safety in 2012, the data have repeatedly shown that vaccines are extremely safe, and occurrences of serious adverse events following immunization (AEFI) are very rare. Further information is available in the recently released Annual Report on Vaccine Safety in Ontario.



What is an AEFI?

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.

Information in the report comes from Ontario healthcare providers, such as doctors, nurses or pharmacists, as well as parents. Local public health units receive and investigate all reports of AEFIs. This includes relatively minor, expected side effects that may occur after vaccine such as fever, pain or redness at the injection site, as well as less common or unexpected health events, which may or may not be associated with vaccine.

By routinely reviewing and reporting on adverse events, we continuously assess the safety of vaccines used in Ontario and can detect possible safety issues if these arise. In addition, this information is available to the public to help alleviate fears and reinforce the safety and science behind vaccines. This can assist individuals in making informed decisions about vaccinating themselves and their children. This information also provides scientific evidence for healthcare providers, who are a trusted source of health information for patients. Resources like the Annual Report on Vaccine Safety in Ontario and the Immunizer Overview provides them with messaging and resources to support sound vaccination advice to their patients.

Vaccines protect millions of lives in Ontario every year. Ongoing work by public health, like the vaccine safety report, is important to ensure that we are protecting Ontarians from misinformation as well as vaccine-preventable disease.

Dr. Shelley Deeks is the Medical Director of Immunization and Vaccine-Preventable Diseases at Public Health Ontario. Dr. Deeks and her team to put together the Annual Report on Vaccine Safety in Ontario. For more information see PHO's Vaccine Safety page.

Baby Boxes: Public Health Key Messages for Healthcare Providers and Community Partners

Baby boxes originated in Finland in 1938 and have been distributed by the Finnish government as part of the country's Maternity Grant Act. This program was developed as a strategy to improve maternal and child health by providing an incentive for pregnant women to seek prenatal care.

Recently, two separate enterprises have established Baby Box programs in Ontario: the Baby Box Co. and Baby Box Canada. These programs are not the same as the Finnish model in that they are not provided by the Ministry of Health and Long Term Care, and the boxes are supplied with items provided by companies marketing their products.

KEY MESSAGES

1. There are aspects of the baby box businesses, such as some of the information available on their website, that does not align with the recommendations of public health. We do not endorse, support, or recommend the distribution and use of the aforementioned baby boxes. This message is not intended to influence the promotion and distribution of boxes by other agencies, organizations and individuals.
2. Baby boxes may contain products that are non-compliant with the Baby Friendly Initiative (BFI). BFI is a global WHO and UNICEF initiative that focuses on the needs of newborns and helps mothers and families to give their infants the best start possible. This includes encouraging and helping women to successfully initiate and continue to breastfeed their babies. Baby Friendly Initiative Ontario is an excellent resource for further information (www.bfontario.ca). The corporate sponsorship and contents of the aforementioned baby boxes may violate the WHO Code for the Marketing of Breastmilk Substitutes.
3. Health Canada's Consumer Product Safety Program operates primarily under a post-market regime, and therefore does not conduct pre-market evaluation of products (Health Canada, 2015). This means that infant sleep products are not subject to evaluation until after they become available to the public.

Families can access safe sleep guidelines through:

- their local public health unit's website
- Health Canada: www.hc-sc.gc.ca search *Is your child safe? Sleep Time*
- Public Health Agency of Canada: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca search *Safe Sleep*

If you have questions, concerns, or would like to discuss the information provided in this document further, please contact Dawn Hanes at 705-743-1000, ext. 289.

February is Water Month in Peterborough!

We are celebrating this healthy and life-sustaining substance through the Healthy Kids Community Challenge (HKCC) in Peterborough this February. If you would



like to support this initiative you can revisit the [July 2016 FYI](#) with more details on Theme 2 of HKCC: Water Does Wonders, including tips for practitioners. You can also access a Water Month poster that you are welcome to post in your office at <http://sustainablepeterborough.ca> search [Healthy Kids Community Challenge](#). Thanks for your support!

Theme 3 of HKCC is Choose to Boost Veggies and Fruit, and is in the planning phase, to be starting in April. If you are interested in being added to the HKCC email list to receive monthly updates, contact Deanna Moher at dmoher@peterboroughpublichealth.ca or 705-743-1000, ext. 355.

How to Give Babies Peanut-based Foods to Cut Allergy Risk

The 2017 addendum to the 2010 "Guidelines for the diagnosis and management of food allergy", were released in early January 2017. The addendum provides three separate guidelines for infants at various risk levels for the development of peanut allergy and is intended for use by a wide variety of healthcare providers.

Health Canada has been providing similar recommendations as per Nutrition for Healthy Term Infants 6-24 months, which is to give babies common allergens like peanuts early and often in appropriate textures. Just wait until they are about 6 months, which is when they are ready for solids.

To review the guidelines via the Journal of Allergy and Clinical Immunology visit: www.jacionline.org search [Addendum Guidelines for the Prevention of Peanut Allergy](#)

EatRight Ontario Dietitians are available to answer patient or healthcare provider questions on this and other infant feeding topics by calling toll-free 1-877-510-5102 or emailing a Dietitian by visiting www.eatrightontario.ca

Resources For HCPs

Zika virus

The latest fact sheets on Zika virus from the Public Health Agency of Canada are available on www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca | [For Professionals](#) | [Health Professionals](#) | [Vector Borne Diseases](#) | [Zika Virus](#)

- For health professionals: Zika virus
- Fact sheet for health professionals: Zika virus
- Zika virus: Counselling travelers

New Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule Available Online

Ontario's new publicly funded schedule for immunization—updated December 2016— is now available online. There are no print copies available, however you may download and print the new schedule from www.health.gov.on.ca search [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule](#)

The new schedule includes updates to the HPV vaccine section to include boys and herpes zoster (shingles) vaccine for those 65 to 70 years of age.

For more information, contact Vaccine Preventable Disease program nurses at 705-743-1000, ext. 131.

Events For HCPs

What's all This Fuss About the Early Years? What is the Role of Community and Primary Care to Maximize this Development?

January 27, 2017 - Grand Rounds

8:00 a.m. - 9:00 a.m.

Royal Gardens Chapel, 1160 Clonsilla Ave., Peterborough
Light Refreshments Provided

Dr. Jean Clinton is an Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Psychiatry and Behavioural Neurosciences at McMaster, division of Child Psychiatry. She is on staff at McMaster Children's Hospital with cross appointments in Pediatrics and Family Medicine, and an Associate in the Department of Child Psychiatry, University of Toronto and Sick Children's Hospital. Not only is Dr. Clinton a knowledgeable and engaging presenter, she also has a wealth of experience and an even more extensive biography. To learn more, visit www.drjeanclinton.com

Resources For Patients

Zika virus

The latest fact sheets on Zika virus from the Public Health Agency of Canada are available on www.peterboroughpublichealth.ca | [My Home & Environment](#) | [My Environment](#) | [Zika Virus](#)

- Pregnancy and Zika virus*
- Travelling and Zika virus
- Top 5 facts about Zika virus

*NOTE: This Factsheet is included in the First Prenatal Visit package.

Health Events For Patients

The First "R" is Relationships Thursday, January 26, 2017

7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Queen Mary Public School - Auditorium
1445 Monaghan Road, Peterborough
Free Event - Light Refreshments Provided
No Registration is Required

The City of Peterborough along with Peterborough Public Health invite parents, early years professionals, teachers and anyone involved with young children to join Dr. Jean Clinton as she explores the developing brain and the crucial role relationships with others play in child mental health and development.

Prenatal Health Fair

This event is free and open to everyone with an interest in learning how best to prepare for having a baby, and about the supports available in the Peterborough area. The Prenatal Health Fair features interactive displays and demonstrations on a wide variety of topics such as nutrition for baby and mom, becoming a parent, baby's development, and much more.

Next Prenatal Health Fair:

Monday, March 6, 2017

6:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.

Holiday Inn, 150 George Street Peterborough

