

Q&A

Q: Why do children in schools/daycare get more infections?

A: Young children have not yet developed natural resistance. Also, germs can spread easily in a group setting. Since many diseases are contagious before symptoms appear, it is difficult to prevent them from spreading.

Q: How do germs spread?

A: Many infections spread through contact with body fluids and secretions. Examples include:

- Sharing cups, toothbrushes and toys (saliva)
- Coughing and sneezing (mucous droplets)
- Poor handwashing after using the bathroom (feces and urine)
- Touching discharges and sores (secretions)
- Blood entering a break in the skin (blood)
- Improper handling of soiled diapers (feces and urine)

Q: What are the signs of a communicable disease?

A: Symptoms can include:

- Fever
- Vomiting/diarrhea
- Unusual behaviour, irritability
- Red or discharging eyes
- Skin rashes or itching
- Coughing – choking, croupy coughs

Note: If your child develops any of these signs of illness at daycare or at school, your child should be kept away from others. You will be called to pick up your child.

Keep sick children at home.

| If child has ... | Stay home until ... |
|---|--|
| Pink Eye Impetigo Strep Throat Scarlet Fever | 24 hours after antibiotic treatment is started. |
| Chickenpox (varicella) Fifth Disease | Feeling well enough to participate in all activities |
| Gastrointestinal illness (e.g. Norwalk-like virus) | 24 hours after vomiting and diarrhea have stopped |
| Whooping Cough (pertussis) | As per directed from public health |

Q: What else can I do?

A: Teach your child good personal hygiene at an early age, including:

1. When to wash their hands:

- After blowing their nose or coughing and sneezing into their hands
- After going to the washroom
- Before eating or drinking
- After playing outside
- After playing with animals
- Before and after handling food
- After handling garbage
- Before and after visiting someone who is sick
- Anytime hands look or feel dirty

2. Coughing and Sneezing Etiquette:

- Teach children to cover their mouth and nose with a tissue when they cough or sneeze
- No tissue? They should cough or sneeze into their upper sleeve, NOT their hands
- Place used tissues in the garbage and wash their hands with soap and water, or use hand sanitizer

If you think your child has a communicable disease, visit your family doctor, and notify your daycare/school of your child's illness. Certain communicable diseases must be reported by doctors, schools and daycares to York Region Community and Health Services for follow up.



For more information:

contact York Region *Health Connection* to speak to a nurse in the Vaccine Preventable Diseases Program

1-800-361-5653, TTY 1-866-252-9933
or visit www.york.ca/immunization



4869 09 2011

A Parent's Guide to Immunization and Communicable Diseases

York Region Community and Health Services
Your Partner in Preventing Disease



Immunization: Your Child's Best Shot!

Immunization is the most safe and effective way to protect your child from disease and illness.

Why?

When immunized, your child's body can fight serious disease. If an unprotected child comes in contact with one of the diseases, he or she could get very sick and could die. When all children are immunized, the community is less likely to get a preventable disease.

When?

Research shows that following the Publicly Funded Routine Immunization Schedule in Ontario works best to protect your child.

Are there any side effects?

Most people have no side effects from immunization. Occasionally, your child may have mild pain, swelling and redness at the injection site. Serious side effects are rare.

It is a good idea to discuss the benefits and risks of any vaccine with your doctor.

For more information on vaccines and the diseases they prevent, speak to your doctor or call York Region *Health Connection* at **1-800-361-5653**, TTY **1-866-252-9933** or visit www.york.ca/immunization

Publicly Funded Routine Immunization Schedule in Ontario

| Vaccine | Age of Child | | | | | | | | | |
|--|--------------|----|-----|----------|----|----|--------|----|----|----------|
| | Months | | | | | | Years | | | |
| | 2 | 4 | 6 | after 12 | 15 | 18 | 4 to 6 | 12 | 13 | 14 to 16 |
| Diphtheria* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Tetanus* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Pertussis (Whooping Cough) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ |
| Polio* | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | | | |
| Haemophilus B Influenza (Hib) | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | | |
| Pneumococcal conjugate | ✓ | ✓ | ✓** | ✓ | | | | | | |
| Rotavirus | ✓ | ✓† | | | | | | | | |
| Measles* | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | |
| Mumps* | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | |
| Rubella* | | | | ✓ | | | ✓ | | | |
| Meningococcal Disease • Type C conjugate • Type A, C, Y, W-135 | | | | ✓ | | | | | ✓‡ | |
| Varicella | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | | | |
| Hepatitis B | | | | | | | | ✓◊ | | |
| Humanpapilloma Virus (HPV) | | | | | | | | | ✓∞ | |

✓ Recommended time of immunization

* Mandatory per *Immunization of School Pupil's Act*

** Six month dose only for high risk infants

† Series to be completed by 24 weeks

‡ Meningococcal A, C, Y, W-135 is based on a single dose offered to Grade 7 students in school

◊ Hepatitis B immunization is based on a two-dose schedule for Grade 7 students in school

∞ HPV immunization is based on a three-dose schedule for Grade 8 female students in school

Other Available Vaccines

Influenza Vaccine is available annually to all Ontario residents, six months of age and older.

Vaccines against Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, chickenpox, meningococcal disease and Pneumococcal disease may be provided free of charge under certain circumstances. Please call York Region *Health Connection* or ask your doctor for more information.

The Yellow Immunization Record

You will need your child's immunization record when your child:

- starts day nursery or kindergarten
- transfers to a school in another area
- goes to camp
- starts university, college or some jobs
- needs emergency health care
- travelling to another country

Every time your child receives a vaccine:

1. Ask your doctor to update your child's yellow immunization record.
2. Call us to let us know that your child has received another vaccine. We will update our record of your child's immunizations. **(1-877-794-1880)**
3. Keep your child's immunization record safe - it's the proof they need to stay in school!

Important

York Region Community and Health Services is required by law to keep immunization information for every school aged child. Your child must have up-to-date information on file to be able to remain in school.

Please remember to call us at **1-877-794-1880** every time your child gets an immunization. It is **your** responsibility to do this. Your doctor will not share this information with us.

Tip: When you immunize your child, check that your own immunizations are up to date! Keep your yellow card up to date, too!