



TIP SHEET 28 • SPRING 2011

Have you Heard of the Herd?

Vaccination Protects Individuals and Communities

Immunization protects everyone.

* National Immunization Awareness Week is April 23 - 30, 2011 *

Theme: "Immunization Protects Everyone"

Each year the Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness and Promotion (CCIAP) declares a week to celebrate the importance of immunization. The goal of the CCIAP is to contribute to the control, elimination, and ultimate eradication of vaccine preventable diseases in Canada by increasing awareness of the benefits and risks of immunization for all ages through:

- Education
- Media relations
- Promotion
- Advocacy

Check out their website at: www.immunize.ca



The Phenomenon of "Herd Immunity"

Herd immunity occurs when the vaccination of a significant portion of a population (or herd) provides a measure of protection for individuals who have not developed immunity. Herd immunity theory proposes that, with contagious diseases that are transmitted from individual to individual, chains of infection are likely to be disrupted when large numbers of a population are immune or less susceptible to the disease. The greater the proportion of individuals who are resistant, the smaller the probability that a susceptible individual will come into contact with an infectious individual. In March 2010, McMaster University published the results of a study by Dr. Mark Loeb which confirmed this theory. Herd immunity is most beneficial to the following groups of people:

- The elderly, who may have a sub-optimal immune response to vaccination
- Infants and children, who may not yet be completely immunized
- Those who are immunosuppressed, through disease or medication
- Those for whom vaccination is contraindicated
- Those who do not respond to vaccination

We all win when vaccination rates increase!

The School Suspension Dimension

Explaining IRIS "Logic"

The Immunization Reporting Information System (IRIS) is a computer database that holds the immunization records of York Region students, and generates questionnaires for any student whose record is incomplete. The programme's "logic" is determined by the recommendations of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI), the vaccine manufacturers' recommendations, and the Ontario Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule.

Designated vs. Recommended Vaccines

All vaccines listed in the Ontario Public Funded Immunization Schedule are recommended and provided free of charge to eligible residents of Ontario. However, only six of these diseases are "designated" as being required for students in school in Ontario. These diseases include: diphtheria, tetanus, polio, measles, mumps and rubella. It is only when one or more of these vaccines are not up-to-date that a student will receive a questionnaire from the Community and Health Services Department.

Strategies and Tips

- If the four-to-six year booster was missed and the child is over seven years of age, give Adacel® and Imovax Polio®, instead of Quadracel®
- Adacel® is due 10 years after Quadracel®
- Inactivated and live vaccines can be given without regard for one another, but two live vaccines must be given on the same day, or at least 28 days apart
- The recommended interval between doses of the same vaccine can be lengthened without concern but it should not be shortened
- Multiple vaccines can be safely given on the same day, provided a separate syringe and site are used for each injection
- **Remind parents to call 1-877-794-1880 to report immunizations for school aged children only**

Thanks for partnering with us to ensure our students are protected!

Did you know?

- **Latex-free Menactra® on the way!** Grade 7 students with a confirmed allergy to latex will soon have access to latex-free Menactra® through the school programme.
- **Please...chill out!** You are an important link in the "cold chain." Vaccines need to be stored at optimal temperatures at all times, from the manufacturer, to Public Health, to your office fridge, and finally into your patient's arm. Please help make sure vaccines remain potent and effective by bringing a cooler and ice packs to transport them safely back to your office.

Questions?

Call York Region Community and Health Services at:

1-877-794-1880
and press 9

to speak with a vaccine nurse.

TTY: 1-866-252-9933