

## **Immunization recommendations for hepatitis A, mumps and influenza** ***Update to York Region Physicians as of November 16, 2017***

Cases of Hepatitis A and mumps have been increasing in Ontario throughout 2017. In addition, the approaching flu season has raised questions about influenza vaccines. Ontario's immunization program provides publicly funded vaccines to help protect people who live, work and go to school in Ontario against these diseases. The following provides additional information on these three topics, including recommendations according to Ontario's immunization program.

### **Hepatitis A**

Ontario is experiencing a recent increase in cases of hepatitis A among men who have sex with men (MSM). Travel history also plays a role as there are currently several large international outbreaks of hepatitis A among MSM in Europe, New York City, Chile and Brazil. Some recent cases have also reported experiencing homelessness and/or use of illicit drugs. Outbreaks in homeless individuals and/or those who use illicit drugs are also being reported in the United States.

Although York Region currently does not have cases related to this increase, we are actively collecting information on the behaviours and practices noted above for hepatitis A cases to assess whether any new cases are related to this increase.

**Immunization recommendations:** Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended and publicly-funded for:

- men who have sex with men,
- people who use injectable drugs, and
- those with chronic liver disease, including hepatitis B and C.

The hepatitis A vaccine is also recommended (however not publicly-funded in Ontario) for those who use non-injectable illicit drugs, individuals living in communities at high risk for hepatitis A outbreaks and travellers. See the Canadian Immunization Guide for additional groups recommended to receive the hepatitis A vaccine. Two doses of hepatitis A vaccine are recommended at least six months apart.

Many of those at high risk of hepatitis A infection are also at high risk of hepatitis B. Consider vaccinating for both diseases, or using a vaccine that protects against hepatitis A and B (e.g., Twinrix®.)

### **Mumps**

Between January 1 and September 30, 2017, mumps activity has increased to a total of 209 cases reported in Ontario. Approximately 59% of these cases were between 25 and 47 years of age. Among the 134 cases with known immunization status, 40% received only one dose of mumps-containing vaccine, while 22% were unimmunized.

York Region has also observed an increase in mumps for 2017, with 13 cases reported between January 1 and September 30, 2017.

**Immunization recommendations:** Two doses of Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine have been routinely given to children in Ontario since the mid-1990s. Doses are currently given at 12+ months and between four and six years of age.

Adults born in 1970 or later can receive up to two doses of publicly funded MMR vaccine based on their primary healthcare provider's clinical judgement. Considering increased mumps activity, individuals who have not received two doses of MMR should be encouraged to be vaccinated.

Due to changes in Ontario's immunization schedule over time, individuals born between approximately 1970 and 1992 (i.e., those who are currently 25 to 47 years of age) likely received only one dose of MMR vaccine and are therefore more susceptible to disease than those who are fully vaccinated. If a patient's immunization record is unavailable, immunization is preferred rather than ordering serology to determine immune status. Allow for at least a four week interval between doses of MMR.

## Influenza

Children and adolescents between six months and 18 years of age are recommended to receive a quadrivalent influenza vaccine for their annual vaccination. In addition to the A(H3N2) and A(H1N1) strains, the quadrivalent vaccine contains two B strains, one from the Victoria lineage and one from the Yamagata lineage. Having both lineages of influenza B in the quadrivalent vaccine helps to ensure broader protection than the trivalent vaccine; which only contains one B strain that may not match the circulating virus.

Influenza B protection is particularly important for children and adolescents as this age group has a higher burden of influenza B disease than among adults. Trivalent vaccine should only be used for children and adolescents if the quadrivalent vaccine is not available.

**Immunization recommendations:** There are three publicly funded quadrivalent influenza vaccines available for children and adolescents in Ontario:

- **FluLaval Tetra®:** an injectable inactivated vaccine for ages six months to <18 years old, without contraindications.
- **Fluzone® Quadrivalent:** an injectable inactivated vaccine for ages six months to <18 years old, without contraindications.
- **Flumist® Quadrivalent:** a live attenuated vaccine given by nasal spray for ages two to <18 years old without contraindications.

Trivalent influenza vaccines (Fluviral®, Influvac® and Agriflu®) are publicly-funded for adults, including those 65 years of age and over.

## Contact York Region Public Health

For additional information on infectious disease or immunization in York Region, contact York Region Public Health at **1-877-464-9675 ext. 73452** or visit our healthcare professionals' website at [york.ca/healthprofessionals](http://york.ca/healthprofessionals).