

September 2023

School Immunization Program: Grade 7 Students

Dear Parents, Guardians and Students:

Public Health Units across Ontario provide opportunities for students to receive vaccines at school.

All Grade 7 students can receive three types of vaccines at no cost:

- **Meningococcal ACYW-135***
- **Hepatitis B**
- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV)**

The Middlesex-London Health Unit strongly recommends that you consider protecting your student against serious infections through immunization.

*Meningococcal ACYW-135 vaccine is mandatory for school attendance under the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*. Students must be up to date or have a valid exemption on file with the health unit to avoid suspension from school.

To receive these vaccines at school:

- Review the *Vaccine Information* and *Commonly Asked Questions* documents included in this package.
- Sign the *Vaccine Consent Form* (remember to sign for each vaccine you would like your student to receive).
- Return the consent form to your school before the scheduled clinic.

Vaccines are given at the first clinic in the fall, and additional doses are provided at the second clinic in the spring. If a student misses any doses, they can be immunized at the next school clinic.

Clinic	Hepatitis B	Meningococcal ACYW-135	Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
Fall	Dose #1	One dose	Dose #1
Spring	Dose #2 (at least 24 weeks later)		Dose #2 (at least 24 weeks later)

A signed consent form is required for students to receive vaccines. All students will receive a record of immunization of doses given at school.

Please contact the Vaccine Preventable Disease Team if you have any questions about these vaccines at 519-663-5317 or visit <https://www.healthunit.com/immunization>

Sincerely,

The Vaccine Preventable Disease Team

See **over** for more information

www.healthunit.com

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School Immunization Program

COMMONLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What if a student cannot receive vaccines on the day of the school clinic?

- If a student is absent on the day of the clinic, the health unit will keep the signed consent on file for the next scheduled school clinic. Consents forms are valid until all doses are given, even if a student is in grade 8.

Are these vaccines mandatory?

- Meningococcal ACYW-135 vaccine is mandatory for school attendance under the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*. Students must be up to date or have a valid exemption on file with the health unit to avoid suspension from school.
- Hepatitis B and HPV vaccines are not mandatory but are highly recommended for this age group.
- Please note that students are only eligible for these free vaccines until the end of high school.

Can a student go to their health care provider to receive these vaccines?

- All three types of vaccines may be available at your health care provider's office. It is recommended that you call ahead to ask if they have these vaccines available. Appointments can also be arranged at the Middlesex-London Health Unit immunization clinic by calling 519-663-5317.

What if a student has received some of these vaccines in the past?

- Please write down the dates when previous doses were given on the consent form and the nurse will assess whether more doses are required for best protection. If additional doses are required, these can be given at the school clinic if the consent form is signed.

Can a Grade 7 Student consent for the vaccine on their own?

- In Ontario, there is no official age of consent. Parents are encouraged to discuss the information with their student. Although, in most cases, grade 7 students can provide informed consent, parental consent is currently required for elementary school vaccine clinics.
- Health unit staff will not force anyone to receive immunizations at school, even if there is a signed consent from the parent/guardian. Nurses will use distraction and encouragement to safely give vaccines.

Where is the needle given?

- These vaccines are given in the deltoid muscle (upper outer arm area). Students are asked to wear a short-sleeved shirt on the day of the clinic if possible.