



MEMO

Date: Monday, May 15, 2023
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To: **Health Care Providers**
From: Dr. Karalyn Dueck, Medical Officer of Health
Re: **Multi-Drug Resistant (MDR) Gonorrhea; Immunization Reminder Letters for Elementary Students; Shingles Vaccine Reminder**

Multi-Drug Resistant Gonorrhea

Public Health Ontario (PHO) Laboratory has identified an Ontario case of *Neisseria gonorrhoeae* (*N. gonorrhoeae*) with multi-drug resistance (MDR), with no known travel history. The case had a similar resistance pattern to recent international reports, including Europe and the USA, with an identified MDR strain of *N. gonorrhoeae*.

Health care providers should order both **culture and nucleic acid amplification test (NAAT)**, for the following scenarios, at minimum:

1. Symptomatic patients, when antimicrobial resistance is suspected
2. Test of cure
3. Pelvic inflammatory disease (PID)
4. Pregnancy
5. Sexual abuse or sexual assault

Treat suspected or confirmed gonorrhea cases as per the current recommendations in the [Ontario Gonorrhea Testing and Treatment Guide, 2nd Edition](#). Please note that Ontario's guidelines are currently under review. Re-treatment is not required for those who are treated as per other evidence-based guidelines (e.g., United States Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Sexually Transmitted Infections Treatment Guidelines). In the event of cephalosporin treatment failure, **consultation with an Infectious Disease specialist** is recommended.

Order **test of cure** for all positive cases of *N. gonorrhoeae*, at all positive sites.

- **Culture** is the preferred method for test of cure, performed **3-7 days** after treatment.
- If culture is not available, test of cure by **NAAT** is acceptable and can be performed **2-3 weeks** after treatment.
- Repeat gonorrhea screening is recommended **6 months** post-treatment for all individuals with *N. gonorrhoeae* infection.

Clinicians should provide general counselling on sexually transmitted and bloodborne infections (STBBI) and **consider offering testing for other STBBIs** including syphilis, chlamydia, HIV, and hepatitis C, as appropriate, if not already completed.

All sexual **contacts of the case within 60 days** of their symptom onset or date of specimen collection (if the index case is asymptomatic) should be notified, referred for testing at all exposed sites, and offered empiric treatment. To avoid reinfection, individuals should be instructed to abstain from sex for 7 days after they (and their sexual partners) have completed treatment and symptoms have resolved. Cases should be counselled on the risk of re-infection, routine screening, and the importance of test of cure.¹

Immunization Reminder Letters for JK to Grade 6 Students

While LPH will not be suspending students overdue for required immunizations in the 2022-23 school year, LPH plans to **resume this process in the 2023-24 school year**. To reduce the number of students receiving suspension notices next school year, LPH will be mailing reminder letters to students in Junior Kindergarten to Grade 6 with incomplete immunization records by June 9th, 2023. Parents/guardians are asked to report vaccines already received to LPH or book an appointment for needed vaccines.

Recommendations for health care providers' patients:

- Parents/guardians to bring the reminder letter from LPH listing the overdue vaccines.
- Parents/guardians to bring a current immunization record showing all historical vaccinations on record with LPH. Parents/guardians can access and download their child's record online at www.GetTheVaccine.ca.
- Complete yellow cards in detail or provide parents/guardians with a printout from the EMR. **Remind parents/guardians that it is their responsibility to report vaccinations to LPH. The reporting website can be accessed through www.GetTheVaccine.ca.**

If health care providers submit childhood vaccination records to LPH, please fax the **complete immunization record** from the EMR to the **LPH confidential fax number: 519-383-7092**, to ensure all historical vaccinations are entered into the immunization record system.

LPH will be offering **catch-up clinics in July and August 2023** targeting those without access to a health care provider. Once clinic details are confirmed, more information and online booking will be available at www.GetTheVaccine.ca. For order forms, routine schedules, exemptions information, cold chain management, and reporting Adverse Events Following Immunization, visit: <https://lambtonpublichealth.ca/health-info/vaccines-cold-chain-inspections/>. For **vaccine storage, handling, and administration** related questions, please call 519-383-8331 ext. 3822 or email vpdnurse@county-lambton.on.ca. For **vaccine orders** information, please call 519-383-8331 ext. 3554 or email vaccineorders@county-lambton.on.ca.

Shingles Vaccine Extended Eligibility Reminder

To be eligible for the free shingles vaccine in Ontario, patients must be 65 to 70 years old and have not previously received a publicly funded shingles vaccine. However, eligibility was extended due to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on immunization services. Individuals born from **1949 to 1952** (i.e., turning **71 to 74 years of age in 2023**) who missed the opportunity to receive the publicly funded shingles vaccine are eligible to receive Shingrix® and complete the 2-dose series **by December 31, 2023**. Due to the **2-6 month interval** required between first and second doses, patients should receive their first dose in time to complete the series before the end of 2023.

References:

1. Adapted from May 3, 2023 CNPHI alert, "Ceftriaxone non-susceptible Neisseria gonorrhoeae in Ontario" [cited May 4, 2023].