

Date: Wednesday, February 28, 2024
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To: Health Care Providers
From: Dr. Dueck, Medical Officer of Health
Re: *Immunization of School Pupils Act - School Suspension Update; Measles Preparedness; Digital Animal Bite Reporting Form; Tuberculosis Screening Education Session*

Immunization of School Pupils Act - School Suspension Update

Student vaccinations must be reported to Lambton Public Health (LPH) before **March 5, 2024** (elementary school) and before **March 26, 2024** (secondary school). If proof of vaccination is not provided to LPH by the aforementioned dates, the student will be suspended from school, in accordance with the *Immunization of School Pupils Act*.

Thank you for your continued support throughout the suspension process. We've seen a steady decrease in numbers since over 6,000 first notices were mailed in January. As of February 27, 1,117 elementary students and 640 high school students remain on the suspension list. If parents/guardians call your office requesting records and/or needing to book an appointment to receive missed vaccines, please follow the process below:

If the student is up-to-date and only needs to report their vaccine record to LPH:

- Provide a copy of the student's **complete** vaccination record for parents/guardians to report to LPH (i.e., yellow card and/or a printed copy of the record with all historical vaccines). **Advise the parent/guardian to report:** (1) by phone 226-254-8222, (2) online at [GetTheVaccine.ca](https://www.getthevaccine.ca), or (3) in-person.
- If a **health care provider is reporting** the record on behalf of the patient directly to LPH, please **fax** the record to 519-383-7092. Do not call to report records, as we expect very high call volumes. LPH will confirm with the parent/guardian once the record has been updated in the system and the student can return to school.

If the student requires additional vaccines listed on the suspension order:

- Book an appointment with the student.
- Tell the **parent/guardian to call LPH at 226-254-8222 to inform us of the booked appointment**. Due to a higher than usual number of students suspended for this year the student will then be removed from the suspension list if they have confirmed an upcoming appointment date for required vaccines. Remind parents/guardians that they still need to report vaccinations to LPH after this appointment, or they will receive a suspension notice if not in the system.



Vaccines can be ordered online [here](#).

More information about vaccine clinics, vaccine reporting, and the vaccine exemption process can be found at [GetTheVaccine.ca](#).

Measles Preparedness

Globally, there have been marked increases in measles cases with subsequent risk of importation of cases to Ontario, requiring measles preparedness locally. In recent months, there have been travel-related cases of measles in Ontario. Individuals susceptible to measles (i.e., those without history of natural infection, those not fully immunized, and those who are immunocompromised) are particularly at risk. With international travel anticipated over March break, health care providers are requested by Ontario's Chief Medical Officer of Health and by public health units to prepare with the following:

1. Support patients in receiving all routine vaccinations (including measles).

According to the [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario](#), two doses of measles vaccine are routinely given, the first dose at 1 year of age (MMR) and the second dose at 4 to 6 years of age (MMRV). However, vaccinations may have been missed due to the pandemic; please ensure vaccination is completed among potentially impacted patients in these age groups.

In addition to routine immunizations, the following is recommended for those at higher risk of exposure to measles:

- Infants 6 to 11 months of age who are traveling to areas with increased measles transmission should be immunized with one dose of MMR. These children will also require two additional doses on or after their first birthday, as per the routine immunization schedule in Ontario.
- Adults 18 years of age and older who have previously received one dose of MMR should receive a second dose if they are health care providers, post-secondary students, planning to travel to areas with increased measles transmission, or based on the health care provider's clinical judgment.

For more information about measles vaccination before travel, please review:

- [Canadian Immunization Guide](#)
- [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario](#) - page 8

2. Communicate that vaccines are highly effective in preventing disease transmission.

3. Be alert to include measles in differential diagnoses, particularly in returning travellers. Implement airborne precautions and [immediately report suspected cases to Lambton Public Health](#) at 519-383-8331.

Follow [Infection Prevention and Control Practices](#), isolating suspected or confirmed cases of measles in a single room with airborne precautions, including negative air flow if available. While under airborne precautions, please use Public Health Ontario's testing instructions at: [Ontario Laboratory Test Information Sheet For Measles](#) to test suspected measles cases.

Symptoms of measles include fever, cough, coryza, conjunctivitis, and a maculopapular rash that typically begins 3 to 7 days after symptom onset (beginning on the face and progressing down the body), lasting 4 to 7 days. Small white spots (known as "Koplik spots") can appear on the inside of the mouth but are not always present. Symptoms begin around 10 days (range 7 to 21 days) after exposure, with the period of communicability ~4 days prior to 4 days after rash onset.

More information:

- [Measles and Rubella Weekly Monitoring Reports - Canada.ca](#)
- [Measles Information for Clinicians \(publichealthontario.ca\)](#)
- [Travel Health Notice: Global Measles Notice](#)
- [Global Measles Outbreaks \(cdc.gov\)](#)
- [A 30-fold rise of measles cases in 2023 in the WHO European Region warrants urgent action](#)
- [Airborne precautions](#)

Digital Animal Bite Reporting Form

Animal bites and scratches can be reported directly to Public Health Inspectors at Lambton Public Health using the digital [Animal Bite Reporting Form](#). This form is one of the tools on Lambton Public Health's new health care professionals web pages, launched in 2023 to support health care providers.

Other tools include digital ordering, reporting, referral forms, and links to clinical guidance documents. We invite you to share this resource with your office and team members.

Visit our [Health Care Professional pages](#) to find information in the following topic areas:

- Advisories & Newsletters
- Resource Ordering
- Health Statistics and Reports
- Infectious Disease Prevention & Control
- Vaccines
- Maternal/Child Health
- Oral/Dental Health
- Sexual & Reproductive Health
- Social Determinants of Health
- Substance Use

For questions or support using the new forms and health care provider web pages, please email healthcarepartners@county-lambton.on.ca or call 519-383-8331 ext. 3568 to speak with a member of our health care provider engagement team.

Tuberculosis Screening Education Session

Lambton Public Health is inviting health care providers to attend a free World Tuberculosis Day Education Session hosted by the Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Team. This seminar will enhance awareness of tuberculosis (TB) screening, promote the understanding and importance of proper administration of the tuberculin skin test (TST), and the use of interferon gamma release assays (IGRA) blood test. Presenters are Jessica Wood, RN, and Dr. Soparkar, Respiriologist.

The event takes place Wednesday, March 20, 2024 from 12-1 pm, at Rapids Family Health Team, 1150 Pontiac Drive, Sarnia, with a complimentary lunch provided.

Register for the event here: [World TB Day Education Session for Health Care Providers Registration Form - Lambton Public Health](#).

For more information, please contact Lambton Public Health's Infectious Disease Prevention and Control Team at lphtb@county-lambton.on.ca.