

PHARMACISTS NOW AUTHORIZED TO ADMINISTER ADDITIONAL VACCINES



Amended regulations under the *Pharmacy Act* expand pharmacist authority relating to the administration of vaccines. Building on the success of pharmacists' participation in the administration of flu shots through the province's Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP), these recent changes provide patients with more convenient access to many routine vaccines, particularly related to travel. Additionally, patient safety will be improved because temperature sensitive vaccines can now be administered on-site at the pharmacy, instead of having to be transported to another location for administration by a different healthcare provider.

CHANGES TO THE REGULATIONS

Pharmacists, pharmacy students and interns who have registered their injection training with the College are now permitted to administer vaccines to any patient five years of age or older for 13 vaccine preventable diseases in the following circumstances:

- The patient is prescribed a Schedule I vaccine specified in the regulations; and/or
- The patient requires a Schedule II vaccine specified in the regulations.

Where a patient meets eligibility criteria for publicly funded vaccines (e.g., routine childhood immunization, HPV for grade 7 or 8 students, pneumococcal for seniors aged 65+, etc.), pharmacists must inform the

patient of their option to have the vaccine administered by their primary health care provider free of charge prior to administering the vaccine at a cost to the patient.

Authority includes vaccinations for:

1. Bacille Calmette-Guérin (BCG)
2. Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)
3. Hepatitis A
4. Hepatitis B
5. Herpes Zoster (Shingles)
6. Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
7. Japanese Encephalitis
8. Meningococcal disease
9. Pneumococcal disease
10. Rabies
11. Typhoid
12. Varicella
13. Yellow Fever

Additionally, the authority to administer the influenza vaccine in accordance with the Universal Influenza Immunization Program (UIIP) has been extended to pharmacy students and interns.

REQUIREMENTS FOR THE ADMINISTRATION OF VACCINES

The requirements for the administration of these new vaccines align with the requirements already established for the administration of any substance by injection or inhalation.

These include:


- All injections are administered in an appropriate environment that is safe and clean;
- The appropriate infection control procedures are in place;
- A practitioner may only administer a substance by injection after receiving informed consent from the patient, or his or her authorized agent;
- A practitioner has sufficient knowledge, skill and judgement respecting both the vaccine and the condition of the patient, to be able to administer the vaccine safely;
- A vaccine is only administered when it is in the best interest of the patient, given the known risks and benefits and the safeguards and resources available to safely manage any outcomes after administration, including any adverse events;
- Documentation requirements are met; and
- The patient's primary care provider (if any) is notified within a reasonable time after administration.

The College has developed an [Administering a Substance by Injection or Inhalation Guideline](#) to provide further guidance to pharmacy professionals when administering a vaccine.

INJECTION TRAINING AND REGISTRATION WITH THE COLLEGE

Injection training requirements and courses are the same for administration of any injection. Pharmacists must successfully complete OCP approved pharmacist [injection training](#), maintain certification in CPR and First Aid, and register their training with the College.

Pharmacy students and interns are permitted to administer vaccines subject to the terms, limits and conditions imposed on their certificate of registration. Students and interns who attend the University of Waterloo (2012 and onward) and graduates of the University of Toronto (2013 onward) receive the injection training as part of their curriculum. Prior to administering an injection, the supervising pharmacist must confirm that the student or intern has completed all necessary training.

Pharmacy professionals are reminded that they are accountable for practising within their scope of practice, the terms, conditions and limitations on their certificate of registration, if any, and in accordance with their knowledge, skill, and judgment. A pharmacy professional is expected to assess his or her continuing education needs prior to administering a vaccine. 

MESSAGE FROM NAPRA: IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR ONTARIO PHARMACISTS ON VACCINE SCHEDULING

Pharmacists may have questions regarding the schedule of certain vaccines. Of the 13 additional vaccines now permitted, 11 are specifically listed in the National Drug Schedules (NDS). However, human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine and herpes zoster (shingles) vaccine are not listed.

The NDS states that vaccines are Schedule I unless they are "part of a routine immunization program in most/all provinces and territories," in which case they are Schedule II. It is permissible to apply the criteria to other vaccines that are not specifically listed in the NDS.

- HPV vaccine is part of routine immunization programs in all provinces and territories and would therefore be considered Schedule II.
- Shingles vaccine is currently part of the routine program only in Ontario and would therefore not meet the criteria for Schedule II. Shingles vaccine should be considered a Schedule I drug at this time.

Information on routine immunization schedules across Canada can be found at healthycanadians.gc.ca