

Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Guidance for COVID-19 Immunization Clinics

This fact sheet outlines key IPAC practices for those working in COVID-19 immunization clinics.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements

- Universal masking for source control protects others from the wearer and is to be considered in all clinical areas for staff, patients and accompanying persons.
- Follow current organizational universal masking guidance as well as any additional PPE requirements from the Government of Ontario or local public health authorities. Patients and accompanying persons should be encouraged to perform hand hygiene and wear a mask. For more information, refer to Public Health Ontario's [Universal Mask Use in Health Care](#).
- PPE can include medical masks, eye protection (face shield, goggles or some safety glasses), gowns and gloves. Conduct a point-of-care risk assessment (PCRA) to determine the PPE needed. When administering immunizations, medical masks should be worn and eye protection can be added based on organizational guidance and PCRA. In most cases, gloves or gowns are not needed, but should be available if there may be contact with blood or body fluids, broken skin or use of disinfectants/chemical.

Safe injection practices

- Perform hand hygiene before vaccine preparation and between immunizations. Alcohol-Based Hand Rub (ABHR) is the preferred method of hand hygiene unless hands are visibly soiled.¹
- If gloves are worn per PCRA, change between immunizations and perform hand hygiene before putting on a new pair.
- Use a sterile syringe and needle when entering a vial. All needles and syringes are single use only.
- Before immunization, clean the injection site with an appropriate antiseptic such as 70% isopropyl alcohol or 2% chlorhexidine and allow to air dry (i.e., don't wipe the antiseptic off the arm).
- Never re-enter a vial with a used needle OR used syringe.
- Do not re-cap needles after administration and always engage any safety-engineered features.
- Discard used needles and syringes immediately after use into a puncture-resistant sharps container, which is to be accessible at point-of-use.
- 'Dispose of empty vaccine vials into the sharps container or according to local waste management legislation.¹

Safe use of multidose vials

The following recommendations must be followed each time they are used:

- Once the vaccine is drawn up, the needle should be immediately withdrawn from the vial. A needle should never be left in a vial to be attached to a new syringe.
- Mark the multidose vial with the date it was first used and ensure that it is discarded at the appropriate time based on manufacturer recommendations.
- Adhere to aseptic technique when accessing multidose vials. Multidose vials should be accessed on a surface that is clean and where no dirty, used or potentially contaminated equipment is placed or stored.
- Scrub the access diaphragm of the vial using friction and 70% alcohol. Allow to dry before inserting a new needle and new syringe into the vial.
- Discard the multidose vial immediately if sterility is questioned or compromised, if the vial is not marked with the original entry date or if the vial is past the expiry date/time.

Training resources

Public Health Ontario has resources that can assist with any training needs related to hand hygiene, PPE, cleaning and disinfection of the environment or equipment, and sharps and waste management.

- [IPAC Core Competencies](#): All online modules (10-15 minutes each) are recommended to be completed, including Personal Risk Assessment.
- PPE Videos (1-2 minutes each) from [Routine Practices and Additional Precautions](#) webpage.
- Environmental Cleaning: [Key Elements of Environmental Cleaning in Healthcare Settings](#).

References:

1. Public Health Agency of Canada; National Advisory Committee on Immunization. Part 1 - Key immunization information: vaccine administration practices. In: Canadian immunization guide [Internet]. Evergreen ed. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2020 [modified 2020 Dec 3; cited 2022 Oct 20]. Infection prevention and control. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-1-key-immunization-information/page-8-vaccine-administration-practices.html#p1c7a5>

Learn about the virus

To learn more and access up-to-date information on COVID-19, visit the Ontario Ministry of Health's website at ontario.ca/coronavirus.

The information in this document is current as of October 2022.