

2023-2024 School Year Toronto Public Health Update

**to Toronto Catholic District School Board
September 21, 2023**

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Fall 2023 Respiratory Virus Season: Epidemiology

- Respiratory viruses are expected to increase
 - RSV, influenza, COVID-19 & other viruses
- RSV and influenza can be more serious in children
- In Australia and New Zealand: influenza strains that circulated were a good match to the vaccine



Fall 2023 Respiratory Virus Season: Vaccines

- Annual influenza vaccine
- Updated COVID-19 vaccine
 - Everyone over 6 months of age can get the influenza vaccine and the COVID-19 vaccine at the same time
- A new RSV vaccine (Arexvy) has been approved by Health Canada for adults over 60 years. Will be publicly funded for residents of long-term care homes and some retirement homes.
- Staying up-to date with vaccinations protects us from getting severe illness and prevents Long-COVID
- [Long-COVID](#) in children can present as concentration difficulties or fatigue.

Fall 2023 Respiratory Virus Season: Reduce the Spread

- Stay home when sick to prevent the spread of infections.
- [Screen](#) if symptoms of illness - Provincial [Self-Assessment Tool](#)
- [Clean your hands](#) often
- [Cover your cough](#)
- Disinfect surfaces
- Promote good ventilation
- [Stay up to date](#) with vaccines
- Masks, particularly for those at highest risk

Stay Home if You Have Symptoms

Screen yourself/your child for COVID-19 and other respiratory viruses using this questionnaire. If you answer YES to any of the questions, stay home and follow guidance provided. September 1, 2022

1. Do you have any of these new or worsening symptoms? Yes No

A) One or more:

| | |
|--|--|
|  Fever $\geq 38^{\circ}\text{C}$ and/or chills |  Cough |
|  Trouble breathing |  Decrease or loss of taste/smell |

B) Two or more:

| | | |
|--|--|---|
|  Sore throat |  Headache |  Feeling very tired |
|  Runny nose/ nasal congestion |  Muscle aches/ joint pain |  Nausea/vomiting/ diarrhea |

2. Have you tested positive for COVID-19 in the last 10 days and have symptom(s)? Yes No

 If "YES" to Q.1 or 2 Stay home (self-isolate)   Follow extra measures

3. Do you have only one symptom from 1(B) OR any of the following new or worsening symptoms?*

Abdominal pain Pink eye Decreased or no appetite Yes No

 If "YES" Stay home until your symptom(s) is improving for 24 hours (48 hours for nausea/vomiting/diarrhea) and you do not have any new symptoms

Stay home (self-isolate) if you are sick:
Stay home until you have no fever and your symptoms are improving for at least 24 hours (or 48 hours if nausea/vomiting/diarrhea).
Anyone who is feeling sick or has any new or worsening symptoms of illness, including those not listed, stay home until symptoms are improving and seek assessment if needed.

Follow extra measures: For 10 days after the start of symptoms:

| | | |
|---|---|--|
|  Wear a well-fitted mask in all public settings (including schools/child care, unless <2 years of age). |  Avoid non-essential activities where you take off your mask (e.g., playing an instrument in music class or during sports or dining out). |  Do not visit people or settings (e.g., hospitals, long-term care homes) at higher risk, including where there are seniors or those who are immunocompromised. |
|---|---|--|

This tool is consistent with [provincial self-assessment tool](#).

*If the symptom is from a known health condition that gives you the symptom, select "No." If the symptom is new, different or getting worse, select "Yes." If there is mild tiredness, sore muscles or joints within 48 hours after a COVID-19 or flu vaccine, select "No."

toronto.ca/Covid19 

Fall 2023 Respiratory Virus Season: Reduce the Spread

Cover Your Cough



1. Cover your mouth and nose when you cough, sneeze or blow your nose.



2. Put used tissue in the garbage.



3. If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve, not in your hands.



4. Clean your hands with soap and water or hand sanitizer (minimum 70% alcohol-based).

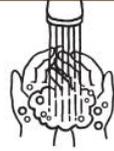
Stop the Spread of Germs

Always Cover Your Cough

- Covering your cough or sneeze can stop the spread of germs
- If you don't have a tissue, cough or sneeze into your sleeve
- Keep your distance (more than 2 metres/6 feet) from people who are coughing or sneezing

PHOTO: ISTOCK

Hand Washing



1. Wet hands.



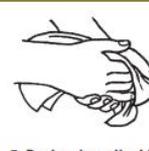
2. Apply soap.



3. Lather for 15 seconds. Rub between fingers, back of hands, fingertips, under nails.



4. Rinse well under running water.



5. Dry hands well with paper towel or hot air blower.



6. Turn taps off with paper towel, if available.

Stop the Spread of Germs

Always Wash Your Hands

After you:

- Sneeze, cough or blow your nose
- Use the washroom or change diapers
- Handle garbage
- Play outdoors

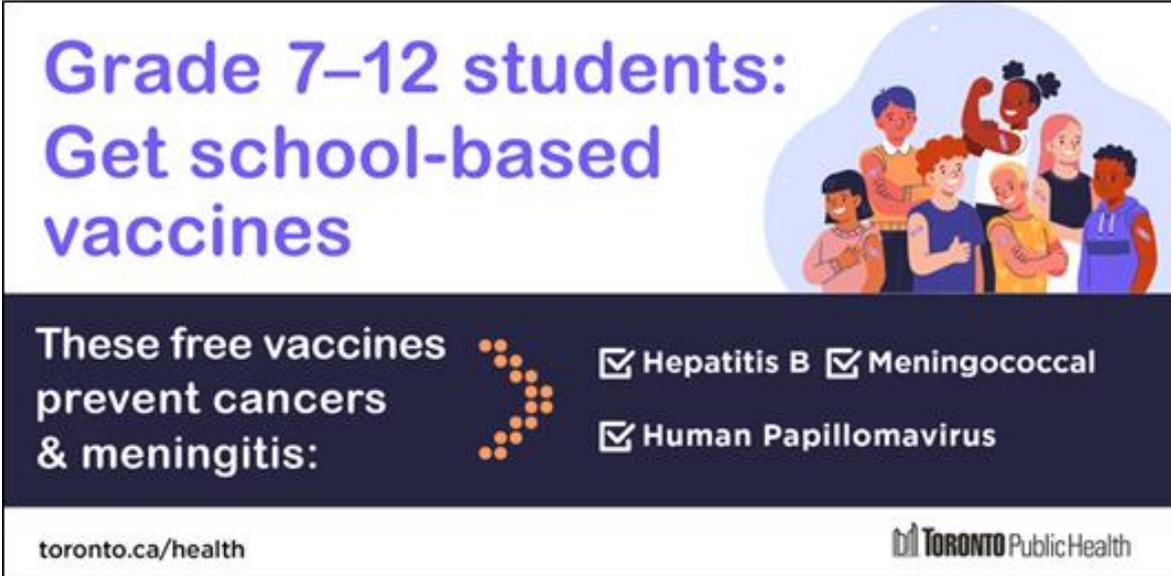
Before and after you:

- Prepare or eat food
- Touch a cut or open sore

PHOTO: ISTOCK

Student Immunization Program: 2023-24 School Year

- **Grade 7 & 8 students** will be offered these vaccines in school
- **Grades 9 to 12 students** who missed these vaccines can still get them for free at a [TPH immunization clinic](#)



**Grade 7–12 students:
Get school-based
vaccines**

These free vaccines prevent cancers & meningitis:

- Hepatitis B
- Meningococcal
- Human Papillomavirus

toronto.ca/health

 TORONTO Public Health

Thank you for allowing us to come into your schools!

- Since June 2022, TPH has focused on helping grade 7-12 students catch up on school-based vaccinations
- Catch-up efforts are reflected in increased SIP vaccination rates at end of 2022-23 school year

114,523 vaccines provided

54,967
students

1,100
clinics

560
unique
schools

- [Routine vaccines](#): Required or a valid exemption under the Immunization of School Pupils Act:
 - Measles
 - Mumps
 - Rubella
 - Diphtheria
 - Meningococcal
 - Tetanus
 - Polio
 - Pertussis
 - Chicken pox
- TPH will continue to send letters to parents and students who are outstanding



Parents, report vaccinations to Toronto Public Health at [Immunization Connect](#)

Ontario's Publicly Funded Immunization Schedule

You can also check [Publicly Funded Immunization Schedules for Ontario- June 2022](#) for more information on routine vaccination

| Vaccine | Diphtheria | Tetanus | Pertussis | Polio | Haemophilus B (Hib) | Pneumococcal-C-13 | Rotavirus | Measles | Mumps | Rubella | Varicella (Chickenpox) | Meningococcal-C | Meningococcal-ACYW | Hepatitis B | Human papillomavirus (HPV) | Pneumococcal-P23 | Shingles |
|-------------------|------------|---------|-----------|-------|---------------------|-------------------|-----------|---------|-------|---------|------------------------|-----------------|--------------------|-------------|----------------------------|------------------|----------|
| 2 months | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4 months | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | |
| 6 months | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 1 year * | | | | | ✓ | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 15 months | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | | | | | | |
| 18 months | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 4-6 years | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | |
| Grade 7** | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | |
| 14-16 years | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Every autumn | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | | | |
| Adults | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Each Pregnancy*** | ✓ | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Every 10 years | ✓ | ✓ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| 65-70 years | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ |
| 65 years + | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ✓ | | |

Boxes filled with the same colour are given as one needle.

Rotavirus vaccine is given by mouth, 2 doses.

* Vaccines required at 1-year of age should be given on or after the child's first birthday.

The vaccines in bold print are required for school attendance under the Immunization of School Pupils Act.

**Vaccines are offered in Grade 7 and 8 schools. High school students may start or catch-up on missed doses at community clinics.

***Vaccine for each pregnancy is recommended, regardless of any prior doses.

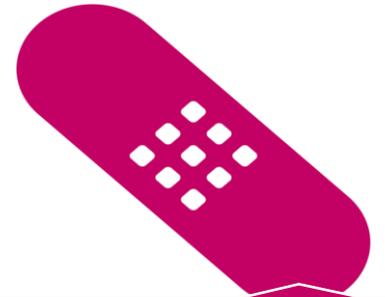
Routine Vaccinations: Where to get them

Routine and school-based vaccines are available at our [City Run Clinics](#)

- Hours of operation at all City Run Clinics are:
 - Tuesday to Friday: Noon to 6 p.m.
 - Saturday: 10 a.m. to 4 p.m.
 - Sunday & Monday: Closed

Clinic locations:

- Cloverdale Mall (250 The East Mall)
- Metro Hall (214 Wellington St West)
- North York Civic Centre (5100 Yonge St)
- Scarborough (410 Progress Avenue, unit D3 – near Scarborough Town Centre)



[Book online](#)

or

Call 1-833-943-3900
(TTY 1-866-797-0007)

School Immunization Program and Routine Vaccines: Vaccination Rates

Goal: Achieve pre-pandemic vaccine rates and higher

Vaccine compliance rates before pandemic compared to current rates:

| Student Immunization Program (SIP) (grade 7) vaccines | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| | 2017/2018 | 2022/2023 |
| Meningococcal | 86% | 78% |
| Hepatitis B | 77% | 62.5% |
| Human Papillomavirus | 66% | 57% |

| Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) vaccines | | |
|---|-----------|-----------|
| | 2017/2018 | 2022/2023 |
| Grade 2 | 78% | 43% |
| Grade 11 | 91% | 23% |
| Grade 12 | 87% | 22% |

Diseases of Public Health Significance: Reportable Diseases

- If Principals suspect or have confirmation of a [disease of public health significance](#)
- **Report to Toronto Public Health - Communicable Disease Notification Unit at 416-392-7411** during business hours Monday to Friday 8:30 am to 4:30 pm.

- All publicly funded schools will receive consultation, resources and referrals from a [School Liaison Public Health Nurse](#) (SLPHN) upon request
- Prioritized schools will be assigned an SLPHN and will receive:
 - comprehensive support for school health assessment and planning
 - staff capacity-building
 - student and parent engagement supports
- All schools will have access to online curriculum supports and tools on TPH's [website](#)

- TPH Dental & Oral Health Services Staff will be conducting dental screening in all elementary school grades this school year.
- Families of children with identified dental care needs will be assisted in the process of finding a dental provider and establishing oral health habits at home.



Goal: To ensure that students who are at risk for poor nutritional intake have access to safe, adequate and nutritious food during the school day

- TPH Dietitians and Inspectors, along with [Student Nutrition Ontario – Toronto](#) partners, are available to support your student nutrition program.
 - Send student nutrition program-related food safety questions to dinesafe@toronto.ca.
 - Send questions about nutrition, menu planning and/or 2023/24 municipal funding applications and appeals to snp@toronto.ca.
- Deadline to submit a 2023-2024 student nutrition program grant application or to appeal a 2023-2024 funding decision: Friday, October 27, 2023 at 4 p.m.
- Find student nutrition program resources and grant information at [Student Nutrition Program – City of Toronto](#)

For more information, please visit Toronto Public Health [online](#) including:

- [Communicable Disease Information for Schools & Child Care Centres](#)
- [Health Information & Resources for Elementary and Secondary Schools](#)
- [Respiratory Virus Guidance: Elementary & Secondary Schools](#) and [Healthy Schools](#)
- [Childhood Vaccines – Quick Reference Guide](#) and [COVID-19 Vaccines](#)
- [Mental Health Resources](#)

Questions?

