

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. Topics covered include personal protective equipment (excluding equipment for the safe handling of dry ice), safe injection practices and IPAC training resources.

Personal protective equipment (PPE) requirements

PPE for IPAC could include medical masks, eye protection (face shield or goggles), gown and gloves.

- **For all roles:** Wear a medical mask and conduct a personal risk assessment (PRA) to determine any needed additional PPE such as gloves or gowns. In most cases, they are not needed. Glove indications include contact with blood or body fluids, broken skin or use of disinfectants/chemicals.
- **For immunizers, screeners, or other client or public-facing roles:** In addition to the above, wear eye protection.
- **For non-client facing roles (e.g. custodial or administrative):** Only wear additional PPE as identified by the PRA.



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 PRA, change between immunizations and perform hand hygiene before putting on a new pair.
- Use a sterile syringe and needle/cannula when entering a vial. All needles and syringes are single use only.
- Before immunization, clean the skin with an appropriate antiseptic such as 70% isopropyl alcohol and allow to air dry (i.e., don't wipe the alcohol off the arm).
- Never re-enter a vial with a used needle OR used syringe.
- Do not re-cap needles 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 or expired 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- Once the vaccine is drawn up, the needle should be immediately withdrawn from the vial.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. Alternatively, contact ipac@oahpp.ca for resources that can be used by trainers, e.g., presentation slides.
- 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. Government of Canada. Vaccine administration practices: Canadian Immunization Guide [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2020 [cited 2020 Dec 09]. 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.

For more information please contact: _____

The information in this document is current as of December 15, 2020

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