

COMMON ERRORS ON IMMUNIZATION FORMS

Omissions, failure to plan ahead, and errors can be costly to the student and cause delays that can jeopardize a student's enrolment in one of our Nursing programs. Please take the time to carefully prepare all your documentation.

It is important for students and health care providers (HCPs) to read the information and instruction guide attached to the New Student Immunization/Health Record. Students should explain that they are about to enrol in our nursing program and will have clinical placements as part of their studies. These health requirements are intended to assess if students are fit for practicum and that they are fully aware of any risks they may undergo if they do not have the requirements.

The following common errors cause students' immunization records to be rejected by UofT:

- Not completing all sections of the form
- Students and their HCPs present lab reports and other supporting documentations but do not make note on the immunization form. Information must be consolidated and validated by the signature of the HCP on the immunization form. The immunization information cannot be scattered across various documents. We will not consolidate the information for students. All the information should appear on the form.
- Hepatitis B results only include lab results of immunity or just the dates of shots but not both
- TB positive results without chest x-ray results (must be within the last year)
- A student had a previously documented negative two-step test but the HCP did not indicate the date of the last known negative 2-step TB test.
- MMRV titres show only the date or a notation "immune" (must show BOTH "DD/MM/YYYY immune")
- Documents are not in English (we require certified/notarized translations)
- The immunization form is not signed by the student
- The immunization form does not have both the stamp (or name, address, and phone number of clinic) and signature of a HCP (students cannot sign as a health care professional)

IMMUNIZATION FAQ's

General Questions

GQ. Is the yellow immunization record or report from my health care institution accepted as proof of immunization?

A. It is not; you still require the Immunization Record form to be completed, signed, and stamped by a Health Care Professional. You can however include a photocopy of additional records with your form.

GQ. Where can I get my immunizations?

A. You can get immunizations at any primary health care provider's office, any Occupational Health department at your employer (if you work for a hospital) or at the UofT Student Health Services.



GQ. Who is authorized to sign my immunization form?

A. We will accept the signature of a physician, NP (NP students cannot sign their own forms), occupational health nurse or RN. However, for exceptional cases, it is preferred students have the advice of their family physician.

GQ. What program do I indicate on my immunization form?

A. Indicate one of five program options: BScN, MN Clinical, MN HSLA, MN NP, or Post Master NP.

GQ. Is this the only time I will have to present my immunization information?

A. Students beginning Year 1 must complete the 'Immunization Form for New Students'. Students beginning Year 2 must submit information regarding TB status. Students in Year 2 who tested negative for TB prior to Year 1 must complete the 'Immunization Form for Returning Students'. Students in Year 2 who tested positive for TB prior to Year 1 and had proof of negative CXR must obtain a new CXR prior to Year 2. Students who started a vaccine series (e.g. second Hep B series) in Year 1 must update and submit the 'Immunization Form for New Students' again prior to Year 2.

GQ. Is it true that if I provide a doctor's note, I can leave parts of my form incomplete?

A. In most cases, students with incomplete forms will have their forms rejected. Please consult our examples posted on our website for guidance on how to complete your form <https://bloomberg.nursing.utoronto.ca/current-students/student-forms#content4>. For instance, a doctor's note indicating a student is receiving a second MMRV vaccine at a later date (after our deadline) will not be accepted. Similarly, a doctor's note regarding lab evidence for Hep B immunity in section A of our form cannot waive this requirement. The immunization form will not be accepted until either the date of the second dose for MMRV has occurred (or the student can provide positive blood test results) or all of Section A for Hep B is completed. Only a few exceptions apply. Students who have completed sections A and B for Hep B i.e. are non-immune to Hep B in Section A and HBsAg negative in Section B and must complete a 2nd series of 3 doses along with follow up lab evidence in section C will be granted an extension. You can submit your immunization/health record demonstrating you are receiving a second series but have not yet completed the 3 doses (i.e. show the first date and attach documentation to indicate the dates of next shots). Whenever exceptions are made to any of our requirements, we require a standard response i.e. a written letter from a physician with the following information: 1) An alternative is acceptable (in your case, a booster is sufficient instead of second series); 2) An acknowledgement that you are enrolled in a nursing program and clinical placements are required; and 3) A statement that you are fit for clinical settings.

GQ. What does it mean to book an appointment on the web portal for submitting my documents?

A. Students receive a login for accessing an online secure system for uploading their documents. Once students have access to the web system, each student will be required to book an "appointment", i.e., ESPC (electronic student permit check). This does not entail physically arriving at any location. The "appointment" reserves a spot in the queue for when a student's file will be reviewed. It is the date by when students will have all their documents uploaded and ready for assessment. Students should book in advance when they anticipate their documents will be ready. An initial fee will be charged to students and additional charges will apply for any incomplete submissions (don't forget to upload your JPEG photo along with all your forms!).



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- GQ. What if I reserve a date for my file to be reviewed but I'm not ready in time for the appointment?**
- A. If you are not ready and your appointment for your file to be reviewed is approaching, you can reschedule your appointment without any additional cost. Missed appointments or partial submissions will result in failing the student preparedness permit. You will need to book a subsequent appointment to pass your student preparedness permit check and additional charges will apply.
- GQ. If I receive lab results translated, do I still need to complete the immunization form?**
- A. Yes, students need to still complete the immunization form with a HCP. Incomplete forms will result in not being able to be approved for enrolment. Students need to ensure all the information is documented on our health form.
- GQ. What if I haven't activated my UofT email address. Can I indicate another email address on the form?**
- A. Yes.
- GQ. What number do I call if I have questions?**
- A. It is preferable that you do not obtain advice verbally. Please contact our offices via email so that communications can be verified in writing.

Hepatitis B

- HBQ. I failed my student preparedness permit appointment because I did not complete all of section A for Hep B on the form. Am I required a HepB titre if I received the HepB series shots?**
- A. Our template clearly states all of section A must be completed. A titre is required. Students must have lab evidence of immunity. If students are non-immune, further testing is required (see details on immunization record).
- HBQ. For Hepatitis B I had the three shots a long time ago and I don't know the exact dates. I was tested immune in the lab for Hep B. Do I still need the dates of when I got the three shots for it?**
- A. For Hepatitis B, we require both the dates of shots as well as lab evidence for immunity. You can give us the approximate year (if not the month and date) for the shots. If you cannot recall when you were immunized, you can indicate the year you were in Grade 7 (if you were in Ontario) or refer to the current provincial and territorial schedule for HB immunization <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/page-7-hepatitis-b-vaccine.html#tab1>.
- HBQ. I was not born in Canada and have no record of Hepatitis B shots. How quickly can I get my shots and lab results?**
- A. Please consult your HCP. In the past, students have been able to fast track their Hep B series e.g. (June 1, June 8, and June 30).
- HBQ. What if I only received 2 shots (not 3 shots)?**
- A. We require at least two dates of shots as well as lab evidence for immunity. Typically, there are three shots but it will depend on regional schedules. Please refer to the current provincial and territorial schedule for HB immunization <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/page-7-hepatitis-b-vaccine.html#tab1>.



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HBQ. What if I find out that I'm a hepatitis B carrier?

A. Your HCP will counsel you on safety issues, precautions etc. You must notify UofT if you have a communicable disease (Hep B, Hep C, Tb, or HIV infection).

HBQ. What if I'm non-immune to hepatitis B?

A. Individuals who are non-immune must be screened for surface antigen HBsAg. If the HBsAg result is positive, a further screen for e-antigen HBeAg must be performed (section B). If identified as non-immune in Section A and HBsAg negative in section B, then complete section C. You can submit your immunization/health record demonstrating you are receiving a second series but have not yet completed the 3 doses (i.e. show the first date and attach documentation to indicate the dates of next shots). You will need to show all three dates for the second series when you submit your requirements for Year 2. Your HCP can update the previous form and initial the new dates.

HBQ. I have started my first dose, and will continue my second next week. However, the last dose will not be until November, therefore, can I have my physician write a letter that my next dose will be in November and send it in with Synergy?

A. We require at least two dates of shots as well as lab evidence for immunity. You can submit your immunization/health record demonstrating you received two doses but have not yet completed the 3rd dose (i.e. show the first two dates and attach documentation to indicate the date of next shot).

Tuberculosis

TQ. Is the Mantoux test and TB test the same thing?

A. Yes.

TQ. Is the TB test mandatory or is my documented low risk status sufficient?

A. Yes, the TB test is required. We do not waive this requirement for low risk status determined by one health regional authority since placements can occur in various jurisdictions over the course of the program.

TQ. What does a 2-step TB test involve?

A. Two injections approximately 1-3 weeks apart. Each injection is 'read' after 48-72 hours.

TQ. I have never had a TB test before. My HCP thinks that only one step is necessary, do I need to have the second step?

A. You need a prior documented two-step test. Each year thereafter is a one-step test.

TQ. Do I need to be tested annually and does it matter when I get tested before starting the program?

A. An annual Mantoux test is required if the result of a previous test was negative. If a student is tested before end of June, it means that their TB test results expire during the academic year. The Faculty of Nursing will be forced to de-enrol students who do not comply with our requirements. For this reason, students should repeat a single-step Mantoux in July before beginning the program. Results will then expire at the end of the academic year.

TQ. The first step of my 2-step Tb test is negative. Do I have to have the 2nd step?

A. Yes. A single TB test may elicit little response, but a second test anytime from one week to one year later may elicit a much greater response. This 'booster effect' may indicate a past TB infection.

TQ. I had a documented 2-step TB test done previously. Do I need to have another 2-step test this



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year?

- A. If you had a previously documented negative two-step test done at any time, you only need a single-step test this year. Please ensure your HCP indicates the date of your last known negative 2-step TB test.

TQ. My recent TB test was positive. Is this unusual?

- A. Every year a number of students discover that their TB tests are positive. A positive test does not necessarily mean that you have TB, but you may have been exposed to it in the past. Your HCP will determine whether treatment is required, based on your chest x-ray and size of reaction to the test.

TQ. I already initiated the 2-step TB test and will get my second reading on June 1. Since I completed step 1 prior to June 1 should I redo a 1-step test after June 1?

- A. We have indicated on our website that expiry dates cannot occur prior to June 30 of Year 1. A negative TB test result is valid for 12 months only which means it will expire before end of June next year. Students in this situation should re-do the 1-step in July. However, it will be your doctor who decides if they will complete a new 1-step within a short timeframe.

TQ. Can I submit results of a QuantiFERON-TB Gold test?

- A. A QuantiFERON-TB Gold test can replace a 2-step TB skin test in certain cases. Please connect with the Clinical Education Office if this pertains to you. Your HCP must indicate on the immunization/health form that the results of the QuantiFERON-TB Gold test are deemed sufficient and no TB skin testing is required. QuantiFERON-TB Gold test results are only valid for one year (i.e., a test completed in July will cover the academic year).

TQ. I have a previously documented positive TB test and I had a chest x-ray a couple of years ago. Will you accept my chest x-ray?

- A. Chest x-ray results are required annually.

Measles/Mumps/Rubella and Varicella

MMRVQ. Do I need both 2 doses AND titre results?

- A. No, we will accept documentation of the dates of receipt of vaccines (two doses) or positive titre results for antibodies with date. Please indicate date with the "immune" for each vaccine. If your titres do not show immunity, follow-up with your HCP is required to discuss ways to achieve evidence of immunity.

MMRVQ. How long does it take to get the results of titres?

- A. It usually takes about 3-4 weeks. Therefore, you should take this into consideration to ensure all documentation is complete by the deadline.

MMRVQ. Do I require titres if I have proof of immunization?

- A. If you provided proof of immunization (two doses), titres are not required.



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MMRVQ. If I only have documentation of one MMRV dose, do I need another dose?

- A. Yes. It is now a requirement to have documentation of two doses of MMR. Alternatively, a student can provide titre results showing immunity. However, it is always advisable that you discuss with your HCP that you are entering into a Nursing program and that practicum will be included. For your own protection, you need to know what are the risks.

MMRVQ. If any of my MMRV titre results are “indeterminate” do I need to be vaccinated?

- A. Please consult with your HCP to discuss ways to achieve evidence of immunity.

MMRVQ. My doctor wrote “reactive” on my immunization form. Does this mean I am immune?

- A. Reactive is evidence of immunity. For further details, see Public Health Ontario <https://www.publichealthontario.ca/fr/laboratory-services/test-information-index/measles-diagnostic-serology>.

MMRVQ. Can I be cleared for enrolment if I had my titres done, but I am waiting for results?

- A. No. All documentation must be complete for students to be cleared for enrolment.

MMRVQ. What kind of documentation do I need for chicken pox?

- A. You must have 2 documented doses of the vaccine or positive titre results for antibodies. The results of the titre must be documented on the immunization record. A history of chicken pox is no longer sufficient.

MMRVQ. I was tested indeterminate for MMR. I had two doses of the MMR vaccine when I was younger, and I took a third dose last year. Do I have to take a fourth dose?

- A. You should discuss with your HCP that you do not demonstrate immunity and discuss the appropriate course of action. These health requirements are intended to assess your fitness for practicum and that you are aware of any risks you may be susceptible to. If recommended by your HCP to proceed into our Nursing program without demonstrating immunity, your HCP will need to write a detailed explanatory note indicating that no further vaccinations are necessary and that you are fit for practicum. You can attach this to your completed immunization/health form.

Polio

PQ. If I do not have proof of my polio booster series, what can I do?

- A. It is recommended that you receive a booster and provide the last date of booster.

Influenza Vaccine

IVQ. Do I require the ‘flu vaccine’ and can I get my shot in the summer?

- A. The influenza vaccine is strongly recommended each year. Hospitals and health care agencies have their own specific policies, including outbreak protocols. Students who choose not to have an annual influenza vaccination should be aware that they may be limited from clinical placements in hospitals. The flu vaccine is typically available starting in October/November.



COVID-19 Vaccine

C-19Q. Do I require the 'COVID-19 vaccine'?

- A. Students are required to show proof of full COVID-19 vaccination (primary series of two doses). Students are strongly encouraged to receive a third vaccination (booster). The Province has mandated third doses for all students completing clinical placements in Long Term Care (LTC) settings and we anticipate expansion of this requirement to all placement settings.