LAWRENCE BLOOMBERG FACULTY OF NURSING UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO | Bloomberg Nursing

COMMON ERRORS ON IMMUNIZATION FORMS

It is important for students and Health Care Providers (HCPs) to read the "Information and Instruction Guide for Immunization Record" attached to both the New Student Immunization Record and Returning Student Immunization Record. Incoming students should explain they are preparing to enroll 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 if they do not meet all the requirements. Omissions, failure to plan, and errors on these documents can be costly and potentially jeopardize a student's enrolment. Please take the time to carefully prepare all your documentation before they are submitted.

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

- Not completing all sections of the form.
- Students and their HCPs present lab reports and other supporting documentation but do not complete the immunization form accurately and completely. 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.
- TB positive results without a chest x-ray result (must be following the initial positive test)
- Students had a previously negative two-step TB skin test, but the HCP did not indicate the dates for when the test was completed.
- MMRV titers show only the date or a notation "immune" (must include both the date and whether student is 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 an 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 include a copy of additional records with your form as an additional attachment.

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 U of T Student Health Services (once you are a registered student).

GQ. Who is authorized to sign my immunization form?

A. We will accept the signature of a physician, NP, occupational health nurse or RN/RPN, physician assistant, or pharmacist.

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-Masters NP.

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

A. Students entering the program will need to complete the "New Student Immunization Record" document. Students beginning Year 2 may need to submit additional immunization information. Please consult the "Returning Student Immunization Record" to determine the requirements. Students who started a vaccine series (e.g., second Hep B series) in Year 1 must also update and submit the '"New Student Immunization Record" document 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. For instance, a doctor's note indicating a student is receiving a second MMRV vaccine after our deadline) will not be accepted. 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).

a. An exception will be made for HBsAg negative and non-immune to Hepatitis B (section 1C). Students can submit their immunization/health record demonstrating they will be receiving a second series but have not yet completed all the required dose(s) and/or obtained lab evidence of immunity.

b. **Note:** Whenever exceptions are made to any of our requirements, we require a standard response uploaded to Synergy Gateway Inc. i.e., a written letter from a physician with the following information:

   I. An alternative is acceptable (i.e., a booster is sufficient instead of a complete second series).

   II. An acknowledgement that you are enrolled in a nursing program and clinical placements are required.

   III. A statement confirming 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., ERV (Electronic Requirements Verification). 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.

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 up until 9:00 AM (EST) on the day of your appointment. Any cancellations or documented submitted after this time 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, the student's HCP is still required to complete the immunization form.

GQ. **What if I haven't activated my U of T 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. **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 prefer students provide both the dates of the immunizations and lab evidence of immunity. Lab evidence of immunity is sufficient if documentation of primary series is unavailable.

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 regarding the timelines if additional vaccination(s) are required.

HBQ. **What if I only received 2 doses (not 3 doses)?**

A. We require at least two dates of shots as well as lab evidence for immunity. Typically, there are three vaccinations, but it will depend on regional schedules. Please refer to the current provincial and territorial schedule for this 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. **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 the University if you have a communicable disease (e.g., Hep B, Hep C, Tuberculosis, 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 1B). If identified as non-immune in Section 1A and HBsAg negative is section 1B, then complete section 1C. 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 dose(s) and lab evidence of immunity 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 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).

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Tuberculosis

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

A. Yes.

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

A. Yes, the TB skin 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 1-4 weeks (7-28 days) apart but may be up to 12 months 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 1-step TB Skin Test for all students previously identified as Tuberculin negative. The timing is very important as the TB skin test results must be valid through the end of the academic year (June 30th). Students must then complete their tests after July 1st. The Faculty of Nursing will be forced to de-enroll students who do not comply with our requirements.

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 year?

A. If you had a previously documented negative two-step test done at any time, you only need a single step test. 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 several students discover that their TB tests are positive. A positive test does not necessarily mean 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. Expiry dates cannot occur prior to June 30 of Year 1. A negative TB test result is valid for 12 months 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. Any student with a positive TST or other positive TB history must show documentation of a chest X-ray documented after the positive TST/TB history. We will then accept the chest X-ray provided these conditions are met.

Measles/Mumps/Rubella and Varicella

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

A. No, we will accept documentation of the dates of receipt of vaccines (two doses) or positive titer results for antibodies with date. Please indicate date with the "immune" for each vaccine. If your titers do not show immunity, we require everyone follow-up with your HCP to discuss possible additional vaccinations.

For students with no record of measles, mumps or rubella immunizations, a preferred approach is to immunize without checking pre-immunization serology (regardless of age), although testing serology (IgG) is an acceptable alternative to immunization. For students with no record of varicella immunizations, varicella serology must be tested. Post-immunization serology testing for measles, mumps, rubella, or varicella should NOT be done once immunization requirements have been met.

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

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 titers if I have proof of immunization?

A. If you provided proof of immunization, titers are not required.

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 titer 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 the risks are.

MMRVQ. If any of my MMRV titer 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 titers 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/Varicella?

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

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, an exception may be made.

a. **Note:** Whenever exceptions are made to any of our requirements, we require a standard response uploaded to Synergy Gateway Inc. i.e., a written letter from a physician with the following information:

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Polio

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

A. In the absence of documentation of an original series, the student should receive an adult primary series consisting of at least 3 doses of inactivated polio vaccination (IPV).

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 some clinical settings. The flu vaccine is typically available starting in October/November.

COVID-19 Vaccine

C-19Q. Do I require 'COVID-19' vaccinations?

A. COVID-19 vaccination and booster doses are **strongly recommended**. Students should remain up to date with annual COVID-19 vaccinations according to the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) guidelines. Students who have not had a primary series or do not receive additional boosters should be aware they may be limited from clinical placements in some organizations without documentation of vaccination. Students must adhere to the COVID-19 policies and outbreak protocols at their placement sites.