

IMMSFORMATION!

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BC Centre for Disease Control
An agency of the Provincial Health Services Authority



What's going on with measles?

2019 has been a busy year for measles in BC with the highest number of cases recorded since the last large outbreak in 2014. While measles has been eliminated in Canada since 1998, periodic importations still occur, and these can lead to secondary transmission and outbreaks. The vast majority of imported cases this year were related to travel to various countries in Southeast Asia where large measles outbreaks are ongoing. For the latest measles epidemiological summaries, check out the Vaccine Preventable Diseases section on the [Communicable Diseases page](#) or for weekly updates see the [Measles Epidemiological Summary](#).



Measles vaccination campaign

In response to the increase in measles cases in the early months

of 2019, [the province has launched a measles catch-up campaign](#). The target population for the campaign is school-aged children who have not received two doses of a measles containing vaccine after their first birthday. Health authorities will be identifying such children and contacting their parents, who will be asked to either send in any missing immunization records or consent to their child receiving the MMR vaccine. The campaign also provides an opportunity to update immunization records as it is anticipated that at least some of these children will have been immunized outside of BC. Immunizations will be available through school and community based clinics as well as in some pharmacies and physicians' offices. For more information about measles in BC or the immunization campaign, go to BCCDC [Measles information for British Columbians](#).



RESOURCES FOR THE PUBLIC

New measles posters

This spring, many British Columbians have been asking questions about measles. The BCIC Immunization Promotion Working Group developed three posters to

encourage the public to make sure their immunizations are up-to-date for measles and other vaccine preventable diseases. These posters can be used anytime in the future, not just for the school based MMR catch-up campaign. The three posters focus on different concepts:

1. *It's easy to be protected against measles, are you?*
2. *Travelling? Are your immunizations up-to-date?*
3. *Have you checked my immunization records lately?*

The printed posters will be distributed to local health units throughout BC and will also be available online at immunizebc.ca/posters-pamphlets.



GUIDELINES

Anaphylaxis is a serious, potentially life-threatening allergic reaction. While anaphylaxis is rare, it is imperative that immunization providers are knowledgeable about anaphylaxis and are competent in the emergency management of an anaphylactic event. The BC Immunization Manual, [Part 3 – Management of Anaphylaxis in a Non-Hospital Setting](#) provides guidelines for immunization providers for the initial emergency

treatment of anaphylaxis. These guidelines have recently been revised to reflect current evidence. The two significant changes to these guidelines include:

1. The use of diphenhydramine (Benadryl®) is no longer indicated during the initial emergency treatment of anaphylaxis, and therefore has been removed from the guidelines.
2. Epinephrine is to be administered intramuscularly into the vastus lateralis ONLY, regardless of the immunization injection site or client age. Details of the revisions to Part 3 can be found in [Administrative Circular 2019:03](#). A [Q&A](#) and a [learning module](#) (available on LearningHub) were developed to support this change in practice.

VACCINE MANAGEMENT

The BCCDC currently provides Boostrix®-Polio in its new packaging. Please be aware that “POLIO” and “Tdap-IPV vaccine” are printed in very light colour on the syringe. The text is very faint or may appear completely absent in less than optimal lighting conditions. To help avoid immunization errors, please keep all syringes in the original box during storage and transport and check for unique product identifiers at product selection and administration. The issue has been flagged to the supplier who is working on a resolution.



You may have heard about a potential shortage of diluent for three GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) vaccines: Priorix® (MMR), Priorix-Tetra® (MMRV) and Varilrix® (varicella). This shortage is not expected to affect our routine programs. We are working with Health Canada to secure an alternate supply of diluent including internationally labelled GSK diluent. We will share more details as they become available.

VACCINE UPTAKE

BC has just produced our first report on pertussis vaccine uptake in the first year of life. Of the infants living in the Fraser, Interior, Northern, and Island health authorities, 83% received at least one dose of pertussis-containing vaccine by three months of age, and three doses before their first birthday. Full coverage reports are found in the [Immunization Coverage Reports](#), and coverage statistics are posted in the [Childhood Immunization Coverage Dashboard](#).

KUDOS

Kids Boost Immunity says thank you to the members of the BCIC Immunization Promotion Working Group and all the public health nurses who are promoting our new measles lesson. With the MMR catch-up campaign, many students and teachers have

questions about measles and the MMR vaccine. This lesson provides the answers! Check it out here: [Measles Classroom Resource for BC Teachers](#).

EDUCATION

On March 5th, BC hosted the Western Canada Immunization Forum held at UBC Robson. The purpose of this educational event was to provide a forum for sharing scientific, policy, and operational lessons learned and to inform the planning and delivery of immunization programs in Western Canada. The topics were varied and speakers addressed such issues as vaccine hesitancy, immunizations for special populations, vaccine safety and Ebola vaccine trials. In addition to many local experts, we welcomed several out of town speakers, most notably Dr. Edgar Marcuse from Washington State and doctors Karina Top and Scott Halperin from Nova Scotia. The participants were immunizing professionals from BC, Yukon Territory, Alberta, and Saskatchewan and included 175 in person attendees and 99 by webcast. Although many of those attending were public health nurses, as the pool of immunizers in BC expands, we also welcomed physicians, pharmacists, nurse practitioners, midwives, and for the first time, naturopathic doctors. For more details about the forum and to view the presentations, go to [BCCDC Immunization Forums](#).