



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

Communicable Diseases and Immunization Service
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Date: March 30, 2021

Administrative Circular: 2021:11

ATTN: Medical Health Officers and Branch Offices
Public Health Nursing Administrators and Assistant Administrators
Holders of Communicable Disease Control Manuals

**Re: Update to Communicable Disease Control Manual, Chapter 2: Immunization,
Part 4 – Biological Products, Appendix A – Informed Consent for Immunization
and Appendix E – Management of Biologicals**

Part 4 – Biological Products

COVID-19 Vaccines

COVID-19 Vaccine ChAdOx1-S [recombinant] (AstraZeneca/Verity Pharmaceuticals)

- INDICATIONS has been revised to indicate that the vaccines should be used in individuals 55 years of age and older. Footnote A has been added to address that although the vaccines are authorized for use in those 18 years of age and older, NACI has recommended that they not be used in people under 55 years of age due to a safety signal identified in Europe. In addition content has been added to mention that the product monographs for both vaccines have been updated to include information about observed events of thromboembolic/thrombocytopenia.
- DOSES AND SCHEDULE has been revised to read “Adults 55 years of age and older”.
- The ADMINISTRATION section has been revised to indicate that the upper limit for room temperature is +30°C to align with the most recent versions (March 24, 2021) of the AstraZeneca and COVISHIELD product monographs. The associated footnote C has been deleted as both vaccines now have the same upper limit for room temperature.
- ADVERSE EVENTS has been updated to include content regarding the potential risk of serious blood clots observed within 4 to 16 days following receipt of the AstraZeneca vaccine.

Please remove page numbers: 1-4 dated March 18, 2021
Please add new page numbers: 1-4 dated March 30, 2021

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Appendix A: Informed Consent for Immunization

- Section 7.1 Definitions has been revised to include the following content regarding Temporary Substitute Decision Makers (TSDM): “If no one from the above list of substitute decision makers is available or qualified or there is a dispute about who is to be chosen, the health care provider must choose a person, including a person employed in the office of the Public Guardian and Trustee, authorized by the Public Guardian and Trustee.”

**Please remove page numbers: 14 & 15 dated October 2019
Please add new page numbers: 14 & 15 dated March 2021**

Appendix E – Management of Biologicals

Guidance for Receiving and Handling the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine (including dry ice procedures)

- Content under “Replenishing thermal shipper with dry ice” has been revised to include:
 - the recommended size of dry ice pellets
 - that the thermal shipping container should not be opened for more than one minute at a time.
- The section on “Thawing” has been updated to include the subsection “Handling frozen vials” which provides a link to the COVID-19 Pfizer Vaccine Shipping, Storage, Thawing and Use Guidelines.

**Please remove page numbers: 1-12 dated March 10, 2021
Please add new page numbers: 1-12 dated March 30, 2021**

Guidance for Receiving and Handling the Moderna COVID-19 mRNA Vaccine

- A link to the COVID-19 Moderna Vaccine Shipping, Thawing and Use Guidelines has been added under “Temperature requirements for shipping and storage upon receipt of the vaccine”.

**Please remove page numbers: 1-4 dated March 10, 2021
Please add new page numbers: 1-4 dated March 30, 2021**

If you have any questions or concerns, please contact Stephanie Meier, Senior Practice Leader, BCCDC (telephone: 604-707-2577 / email: stephanie.meier@bccdc.ca).

Sincerely,



Monika Naus MD MHSc FRCPC FACPM
Medical Director
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