

Date: 6 April 2016 (REVISED - Influenza Vaccine Info)
To: South Zone Physicians
From: Office of the Medical Officers of Health - South Zone
RE: Update on Immunization of Preventable Disease – Measles, Pertussis and Influenza

MEASLES

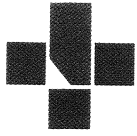
Importation of measles cases continues in Alberta as expected. Although measles is not endemic to Canada and importation is relatively rare, there also exist pockets of under-immunized and non-immunized people at risk. In order to reduce the risk of importation of cases, Alberta Health issued a recommendation earlier this month regarding pre-travel immunization with measles vaccine for those with itineraries including visitation of areas where the virus is endemic. This would include regions where measles is currently circulating such as: Germany, Croatia, Ethiopia, Nigeria, DR of Congo, India, Pakistan, the Philippines, China, and Mongolia. Provincial funding will cover the cost of MMR vaccination in these travellers and they, therefore, should be referred to their nearest Community Health clinic to access publicly-funded vaccine.

The following are the recommendations from Alberta Health.

- Adults who were born prior to 1970 and do not have documented evidence of receiving a measles-containing vaccine, or laboratory evidence of measles immunity, or a history of laboratory confirmed measles disease, should receive one dose of measles-containing vaccine;
- Adults who were born in or after 1970 and do not have documented evidence of receiving a measles-containing vaccine, or laboratory evidence of measles immunity, or a history of laboratory confirmed measles disease, should receive two doses of a measles-containing vaccine spaced appropriately;
- Infants 6 to 11 months of age should have one dose of a measles-containing vaccine; and
- Children 12 months to 17 years of age should have two doses of measles-containing vaccine spaced appropriately.

PERTUSSIS

Although on the decline in incidence in Alberta in 2016, pertussis infections are still occurring. South Zone has had 7 cases of pertussis diagnosed so far in 2016. We would like to take the opportunity to remind you of the following:



- **Prevention:** Pertussis vaccine is part of routine childhood immunization and a single dose of pertussis-containing vaccine is recommended for all adults. Pertussis immunity does wane over time, and cases are certainly possible in previously immunized individuals.
- **Pregnant women** who have not previously received an adult dose of pertussis-containing vaccine should be offered vaccination with dTap **after 26 weeks gestation** as this confers immunity in the mother and provides passive immunity to the infant, thus protecting them when they are most vulnerable.
- **Testing:** Nasopharyngeal (NP) swab transported in Regan Lowe Transport Medium (alternative is charcoal). Note that testing for influenza and other viral causes requires a different NP swab and transport medium (www.provlab.ab.ca/guide-to-services.pdf).
- **Isolation** of ill cases is advised (home isolation) until 5 days of antibiotic treatment has been completed or until 21 days after symptom onset (if no antibiotics taken).
- **Infection prevention and control precautions** are for droplet and contact spread, so please ensure you wear a mask when collecting a specimen.
- **Please report all cases and suspect cases to public health**, so we can initiate contact tracing to protect vulnerable contacts.

INFLUENZA

Although we are at post-peak influenza numbers in the province of Alberta, we still are experiencing a number of new cases in South Zone. ***Only second dose influenza vaccine, for children under the age of 9 years, is still available.***

Thank you for your assistance.

If you have any questions, or wish to report a case, please call our CDC intake line at **587-220-5753** or the MOH on call at **403-388-6111**.