I HAVE immunity

www.ImmunizeBC.ca

MAKE PREVENTION CONTAGIOUS

One of the most important questions on a parent's mind about vaccines is:

"What is YOUR opinion as a health care provider?"

Here is some information about non-publicly funded vaccines including ready-made answers to some of the questions parents might ask you. For information about all immunizations, visit **www.ImmunizeBC.ca**

What are your obligations?

BC health care providers have a vital role to play in ensuring patients make informed decisions about their health and well-being. According to the Canadian Medical Protective Association (CMPA) and the Canadian Nurses Association (CNA), physicians and nurses should be prepared to let people know how they can protect themselves from vaccine-preventable diseases.

If you are uncomfortable with the administration of a non-publicly funded vaccine, you can simply tell parents that it is your professional duty to explain the recommendations of professional organizations. Remember that the purpose of talking about vaccines is to enable people to make informed decisions.

How you can help

Families trust your recommendations. You are the leading reason why parents accept vaccines for themselves and their children. Most people still choose to be vaccinated, and many simply want reassurance. Hand out the Extra Protection Checklist to parents, and be sure to put up the poster where they will see it.

Have a conversation about the vaccines available

It just takes a minute to let parents know that…

- Free routine immunizations guard against 15 diseases.
- Children and their families may also benefit by getting additional vaccines available for a charge.

By taking just a few minutes to chat about immunization, you are empowering parents to know how they can protect their families from vaccine-preventable diseases.

PHYSICIANS	PUBLIC HEALTH STAFF	PHARMACISTS
Ask if a child's immunizations are up to date during any office visit, and advise where they can get vaccinated.	Talk about non-publicly funded vaccines when children are brought in for their regular immunizations.	Review a family's immunization status when they are requesting prescriptions, picking up travel supplies, receiving an immunization or a Medication Review Service.

Hand out the Extra Protection Checklist to get the conversation started!

COMMON QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT VACCINES

Why aren't all vaccines publicly-funded?

Decisions to fund vaccine programs are made by the Ministry of Health based on recommendations from local immunization and public health experts, led by the Provincial Health Officer. They look at local epidemiology, the best available scientific evidence, and the recommendations of national and international expert groups, which are then prioritized with other public health initiatives.

How much do the vaccines cost?

Vaccine costs range from $50 - $200 per injection multiplied by the number of doses in a series. There may also be fees for consultation, dispensing and injecting.

How do I keep the conversation brief when a parent is cautious?

Most parents just want to hear from you that vaccines are safe and you recommend getting immunized. Some parents have read fear-based materials or have been given misinformation so it's important to refute any myths they raise and make a few key points. You can refer them to additional resources such as:

- ImmunizeBC.ca
- HealthLinkBC.ca
- Public health nurses
- Travel clinics

Hasn't my child received the meningitis vaccine?

Parents can be confused because there are a number of different types of bacteria that cause meningitis. The publicly funded program includes vaccines against Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), Streptococcus pneumoniae, and Neisseria meningitidis serogroup C. Meningitis can also be caused by other types of Neisseria meningitidis (other than serogroup C) which are not currently covered by the routine immunization schedule in BC. The word "meningitis" often catches parents' eyes when they see the Extra Protection Checklist and it becomes an excellent way to start a conversation.

What travel vaccines do my family need?

This is a complicated topic. Some vaccines are required for entry and visas. Refer families to:

- A travel clinic for expert advice about the specific area they are travelling to and the associated health risk. Travel health notices and other information can also be found on Health Canada's website (www.publichealth.gc.ca).
- www.ImmunizeBC.ca: Search the travel vaccines section for information, links to other good travel resources including Health Canada, and local travel clinic locations.
- Pharmacies in your community if they specialize in travel vaccines (varies by location).

Who gives non publicly-funded vaccines?

- Some family doctors
- Travel clinics
- Some public health units
- Some pharmacies

REMEMBER, one of the most important questions on a parent's mind about vaccines is: "What is YOUR opinion as a health care provider?"

BRITISH COLUMBIA PEDIATRIC SOCIETY

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