

There are a number of upcoming changes to the provincially-funded Alberta immunization program for your information and attention, as well as some reminders.

**Infanrix-Hexa<sup>®</sup> (combined Tetanus, Diphtheria, acellular Pertussis, Hepatitis B, Polio, Haemophilus influenzae b) Vaccine:**

Effective May 1, 2018 Infanrix-Hexa<sup>®</sup> vaccine will be used for primary immunization for children two months up to and including 23 months of age when diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis, polio, Hib and hepatitis B vaccine are indicated for non-hypo-responsive individuals. The vaccine will be offered at the two, four and six month appointment as part of the routine immunization schedule. Eligible children include those born March 1, 2018 or later. The hepatitis B school immunization program will continue to be offered until this first infant cohort reaches the grade specific program.

**RotaTeq<sup>®</sup> (Rotavirus) Vaccine:**

Through the National Vaccine Procurement process, the contract for rotavirus vaccine for the Alberta routine immunization program has changed. Effective May 14, 2018 Alberta will be using RotaTeq<sup>®</sup>, a vaccine that is delivered using a three dose schedule at two, four and six months of age. The first dose must be initiated prior to 15 weeks of age. The three dose schedule must be completed prior to the infant turning 8 months of age.

**Gardasil<sup>®</sup> 9 (Human Papillomavirus 9-Valent) Vaccine:**

Effective February 15, 2018 eligibility for Gardasil<sup>®</sup>9 vaccine has been expanded to include individuals 17 years up to and including 26 years of age biologically male at birth who have sex with individuals biologically male at birth. Vaccine can be accessed through Public Health, Sexual Reproductive Health and STI clinics. Gardasil<sup>®</sup>9 vaccine continues to be offered to students as part of the routine school immunization program.

**dTap in Pregnancy:**

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and the Society of Obstetricians and Gynaecologists of Canada (SOGC) now recommend pertussis immunization (using dTap vaccine) for all women with each pregnancy. The current Alberta Immunization Policy indicates adults are eligible to receive one life time dose of pertussis containing vaccine (dTap) which may be given to pregnant women at 26 weeks gestation or greater. [Some zones (Central, South) do recommend and cover dTap vaccine with each pregnancy as a result of their pertussis epidemiology. In Calgary zone, only one adult dose is covered; physicians can discuss with patients the national recommendations for dTap with each pregnancy, and write prescriptions/refer patients to pharmacies for additional doses that would be paid for by the patient.] The Alberta Advisory Committee on Immunization is currently reviewing the NACI and SOGC recommendations.

**Reminder - Immunizations on Netcare:**

Netcare includes detailed immunization data, including adverse events, from Alberta Health Services (AHS) immunizers in all zones (all publicly funded and some travel vaccines) and pharmacist immunizers (including influenza vaccine) to assist with clinical decisions. [www.AlbertaNetcare.ca/LearningCentre/Immunizations.htm](http://www.AlbertaNetcare.ca/LearningCentre/Immunizations.htm)

**Additional References:**

- Canadian Immunization Guide: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/canadian-immunization-guide-part-4-active-vaccines/page-9-human-papillomavirus-vaccine.html>
- Alberta Health Services. Immunization Program Standards Manual. [www.albertahealthservices.ca/10802.asp](http://www.albertahealthservices.ca/10802.asp)
- ImmunizeAlberta – immunization resources for parents. [www.immunizealberta.ca](http://www.immunizealberta.ca)
- NACI. Update on immunization in pregnancy with tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid and reduced acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/publications/healthy-living/update-immunization-pregnancy-tdap-vaccine.html>

**Contact the Calgary Zone Medical Officer of Health at (403) 955-6801 if you have further questions.**