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Updated Polio Vaccine Recommendations for Children Previously Immunized with Oral Polio Vaccine

Attention: Physicians, Nurse and Nurse Practitioners, Walk-In Clinics/Urgent Care Clinics, Family Health Teams, Community Health Centres, Indigenous Health Care & Community, Ontario Health Teams, Ontario Health Central, Municipalities

Date: May 3, 2024

The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) and the Ministry of Health have updated recommendations for children immunized with oral polio vaccine (OPV) after April 1, 2016. OPV has not been used in Canada since 1996, therefore these changes will only impact children who received OPV internationally after April 1, 2016.

In April 2016, the World Health Organization coordinated a global replacement of the trivalent oral polio vaccine (tOPV) with the bivalent (bOPV), which contains poliovirus serotypes 1 and 3 but not serotype 2. For this reason, healthcare providers should assume that children vaccinated with OPV on or after April 1, 2016, received bOPV. **To ensure protection against all three poliovirus types, these children (immunized outside of Canada with OPV after April 1, 2016) should complete a polio vaccine series with an inactivated polio vaccine (IPV) or an IPV-containing vaccine using an age-appropriate schedule.**

The health unit will be following up with families whose children's immunization records the health unit has on file that include doses of OPV administered after April 1, 2016, to notify them of this recommendation and recommend that they see their health care provider to receive IPV vaccine. OPV doses have previously been considered valid for Immunization of School Pupils Act (ISPA) requirements, however moving forward any OPV doses administered after April 1, 2016, will now be invalid in Panorama and IPV will be required to be in compliance with ISPA. Note that not all children with previous OPVs will have immunization records with the health unit.

For any patients in your practice that have received OPV internationally on or after April 1, 2016:

- Presume any doses of OPV administered on or after April 1, 2016, were bOPV and are invalid.
- Immunize with an age-appropriate series of IPV or IPV containing vaccine (containing all three poliovirus types).

IPV or other polio containing vaccines can be ordered from the Health Unit on the [Health Professionals Portal](#) using the Routine Vaccine Order Form.

For specific scenarios and catch-up schedules, refer to the [Ministry of Health - Recommendations for Children Previously Immunized with Oral Polio Vaccine: Qs & As for Immunizers](#).

If you have any questions regarding the above information, please contact the Immunization Program at 705-721-7520 or 1-877-721-7520 ext 8806.

