



Increase in pertussis activity locally, provincially

- In the [first five months of 2024](#), there were **206** confirmed pertussis cases in Ontario. [In all of 2022](#), there were 151 pertussis cases in the province.
- In Grey-Bruce, there have been 15 confirmed or probable cases of pertussis so far this year. Only four pertussis cases were confirmed locally in all of 2023.
- Routine immunization against pertussis is important in reducing risk of infection and further transmission.
- The National Advisory Committee on Immunizations (NACI) [recommends pertussis vaccines](#):
 - At 2, 4, and 6 months of age and between 12-23 months;
 - At 4-6 years (booster) and 14-16 years (booster);
 - In adulthood if the patient has not received a pertussis-containing vaccine as an adult, especially if they intend on having regular contact with an infant;
 - In all pregnancies, between 27-32 weeks. Getting the vaccine while pregnant also provides protection for the newborn during the first two months of life (when they are at highest risk).
- The best diagnostic test for symptomatic patients with suspected pertussis is the collection of a nasopharyngeal swab that is sent for PCR testing. [Pertussis test kits](#) are available from the Public Health Ontario laboratory.
- All cases of pertussis must be reported to Public Health.

Ontario's publicly funded pneumococcal vaccine program transitions to new pneumococcal vaccines

- Pneu-C-13 (Pneumovax 13) and Pneu-P-23 (Pneumovax) will be replaced by Pneu-C-15 (Vaxneuvance) and Pneu-C-20 (Pneumovax 20) to offer broader protection against up to 20 different types of bacteria that cause pneumococcal disease.
- Pneu-C-15 vaccine is for use in the routine pediatric pneumococcal vaccine program, while Pneu-C-20 is for use in the high-risk programs and routine adult program for ages 65+.
- The new vaccines are only for individuals who have not completed or received all eligible publicly funded pneumococcal vaccines.
- Fact sheets for healthcare providers:
 - [Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccines for Children Aged 6 Weeks to 4 Years.](#)
 - [Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine for Individuals Aged 5 to 64 Years at High Risk for Invasive Pneumococcal Disease.](#)
 - [Pneumococcal Conjugate Vaccine for Individuals Aged 65 Years and Older.](#)
 - [Q&A for Health Care Providers: Pneumococcal Vaccine Transition.](#)

Information on Mandatory Blood Testing Act and Blood/Bodily Fluid Exposures

- [The Mandatory Blood Testing Act \(MBTA\)](#), updated in 2023, allows eligible persons to apply to have the blood of another person tested for HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis C, if they have come into contact with their bodily fluids. Eligible persons include victims of crime, providers of emergency healthcare services or first aid to another person, or members of groups specified in the Act, such as police, firefighters, and paramedics, among others.
- Eligible persons with an exposure are directed to immediately seek medical attention from a healthcare provider to help assess their risk of infection and discuss care and treatment options -- for example, the need for [HIV PEP](#), which should be initiated within 72 hours of exposure if it is warranted. Physicians and partners should be aware that the Act, when enacted, is unlikely to yield results in less than 72 hours.
- Ideally, the person who exposed the eligible individual will provide voluntary consent to testing and disclosure of their test results with the exposed individual or their physician. However, the MBTA process can be enacted at any time, up to 30 days after the incident, if there are potential concerns regarding co-operation.
- [Application Forms](#) are completed by the eligible person and their physician. Completed forms must be sent to Public Health by fax (519-376-4152) for review for completeness. Public Health submits these forms on the person's behalf to the Consent and Capacity Board, which is responsible for reviewing/approving the application and issuing the order for a source person to be tested. The MBTA process can be initiated immediately after any incident and revoked if the source person complies with testing voluntarily.

Reminder about reporting potential rabies exposures to GBPH

- In late July, a little brown bat from Grey-Bruce [tested positive for rabies](#).
- Healthcare providers must report to Public Health all animal bites and scratches that occur in Grey-Bruce.
- [Ontario Regulation 557 Communicable Diseases – General](#) (under the Health Protection and Promotion Act specifies that a physician, registered nurse in the extended class, veterinarian, police officer or any other person who has information concerning either or both of the following shall, as soon as possible, notify the medical officer of health and provide the MOH with the information, including the name and contact information of the exposed person:
 - Any bite from a mammal.
 - Any contact with a mammal that is conducive to the potential transmission of rabies to persons.

Resources for Primary Care Professionals

- July/August 2024 - Canada Communicable Diseases Report - [Recommendations on Screening for Syphilis in Non-Pregnant Adults and Adolescents.](#)
- July 2024 - The new Public Health Ontario resource, "[Infection Prevention and Control Organizational Risk Assessment for Clinical Office Practice](#)," provides a step-by-step approach for identifying and managing Infection Prevention and Control risks in clinical office practices. Effective [organizational risk assessments](#) can help improve safety for both patients and staff in clinical office practices.
- June 2024 - Public Health Ontario has developed a new [Frequently Asked Questions document on the constituents of wildfire smoke and its effect on air quality and human health.](#)
- July 12, 2024 - [PHO study: Addressing Antibiotic Overprescribing.](#) Antimicrobial resistance is a rising global public health crisis. Overprescribing antibiotics in primary care has been a significant issue, often leading to increased rates of drug-resistant infections and avoidable side effects for patients. A new study, co-authored by PHO researchers, aimed to address this problem by sending feedback letters to more than 5,000 family doctors, resulting in a notable reduction in antibiotic prescribing.

Grey Bruce Public Health Media Releases: July/early August 2024

- July 8, 2024 - [GBPH notified of 1 fatal, 3 non-fatal drug poisonings over past 5 days](#)
- July 19, 2024 - [Kelso Beach at Nawash Park in Owen Sound posted unsafe for swimming](#)
- July 25, 2024 - [Bat from Grey-Bruce tests positive for rabies](#)
- July 25, 2024 - [Swim advisory lifted for Kelso Beach at Nawash Park](#)
- Aug. 1, 2024 - [GBPH notified of 2 fatal, 2 non-fatal drug poisonings over past 7 days](#)
- Aug. 2, 2024 - [Southampton Beach posted unsafe for swimming](#)