

Changes to preferred treatment regimen for uncomplicated gonorrhea infections

- The National Advisory Committee on Sexually Transmitted and Blood-Borne Infections has released interim guidance for the treatment of uncomplicated gonococcal infections for adults and adolescents aged 10 and up.
- The preferred treatment for all uncomplicated gonococcal infections is now monotherapy of 500mg of ceftriaxone IM as a single dose, which is a change from the previous preferred treatment of combined therapy of 250mg of ceftriaxone IM + 1g of azithromycin PO.
- Ontario's Ministry of Health says the Province is adopting the interim guidance as-is.
- As 500mg vials of ceftriaxone are not available in Canada, clinicians should continue using 250mg vials to provide the necessary treatment. To prevent potential dosing errors, it is preferable to administer two separate 250mg injections as opposed to combining two vials of 250mg to administer a single injection.
- In line with the federal guidance, it is recommended that a Test of Cure be conducted in all cases and especially when regimens other than ceftriaxone 500mg IM are used. Repeat screening continues to be recommended six months post-treatment.

Update to Ontario Cervical Screening Program

- On March 3, 2025, Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario) will introduce the human papillomavirus (HPV) test, which will replace cytology as the primary test for cervical screening and will also be used for follow-up testing in colposcopy.
- The HPV test is more accurate than cytology and will improve detection of cervical pre-cancer. The improved performance of HPV testing allows for longer intervals between screens for people who test negative for HPV. In addition, new guidance for management and follow-up will minimize repeat testing and support timely discharge from colposcopy.
- The implementation of HPV testing will result in changes to the Ontario Cervical Screening Program's cervical screening and colposcopy recommendations:
 - The age of cervical screening initiation will be 25.
 - New screening intervals, indications for referral to colposcopy and cessation criteria will come into effect.
 - HPV testing will be used in colposcopy to determine eligibility for discharge and the recommended interval for screening post-discharge from colposcopy.
- Ontario Health (Cancer Care Ontario) is holding the following webinars to discuss the Ontario Cervical Screening Program and implementation of HPV testing:
 - [Feb. 4, 2025 - 7:30-8:30 a.m.](#)
 - [Feb. 13, 2025 - 5-6 p.m.](#)

Accidental drug and alcohol-related deaths rising in Ontario, especially those involving multiple substances: report

- A [new report](#) from researchers at the Ontario Drug Policy Research Network and Public Health Ontario shows the number of accidental drug and alcohol toxicity-related deaths continued to rise dramatically from 2018 to 2022.
- The report aims to help provide insight into where and why individuals present to healthcare settings prior to death, with the goal of identifying gaps in access to care and supportive services for people who use substances.
- The latest data shows over 25% of people admitted to hospital, and 1 in 7 who visited an ER, left before medically advised in week before death. This reveals the challenges and missed opportunities for the healthcare system to engage with this vulnerable population with timely interventions and supports at critical junctures.
- Deaths involving one substance increased by 75%, deaths involving two substances increased by 167%, while deaths involving three or more substances increased by 186% from 2018 to 2022.
- The most common combination of substances involved in toxicity deaths was opioids with stimulants – rising from 30% in 2018 to 42% of all substance-related toxicity deaths in 2022.

Call 211: Elder Abuse Response Pathway launches in Grey-Bruce

- The Grey Bruce Elder Abuse Prevention Network has worked with various agencies in Grey-Bruce to create a local elder abuse response pathway.
- Elder abuse can include, but is not limited to, neglect and physical, financial, sexual, emotional, and psychological mistreatment of older adults.
- Seniors in Grey-Bruce, or anyone concerned about the well-being of a senior in Grey-Bruce, can call 211. 211 navigators will refer the caller to the most appropriate agency to address their concerns based on the situation.
- Elder abuse affects health. It can lead to hospitalization, and even premature death.
- For more information: [Public Health's Elder Abuse Prevention webpage](#).

Resources for Primary Care Professionals

- **January 2025** - Public Health Ontario has launched a new fact sheet, "[Prevention and Management of Avian Influenza in Health Care Settings](#)", which aims to support health care providers with:
 - Identifying and testing human cases.
 - Implementing IPAC measures to reduce transmission risks to health care workers, patients, residents, and clients.
- **January 2025** - Canada Communicable Disease Report (CCDR) - [Updated guidance on Imvamune in the context of a routine immunization program](#).
 - The National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) has reviewed available evidence on the clinical benefits and risks of Imvamune, which offers protection against mpox.
 - NACI has concluded that available evidence supports the vaccine's effectiveness and safety in preventing mpox infection.
 - Building on previous interim guidance from NACI recommending the use of Imvamune for pre-exposure vaccination in the context of ongoing mpox outbreaks, NACI now recommends that Imvamune be used in the context of a focused routine immunization program. Individuals at high risk of mpox, including MSM who meet high-risk criteria such as having more than one sexual partner, should receive two doses of Imvamune administered by subcutaneous injection at least 28 days apart.

Educational Opportunities for PCPs

- **PHO Rounds: C. auris**

Topic: *Candida auris: A New Disease of Public Health Significance (DOPHS): Management of this Highly-Transmissible Fungal Pathogen*

When: Feb. 11, 2025, 12-1 p.m, Virtual

Intended Audience: *Health care workers from a variety of healthcare settings across the continuum of care. This includes acute care, primary care, long-term care/retirement homes, public health units (PHUs), and Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Hubs.*

Description: *This session will discuss: the latest protocols and reporting requirements for C. auris in Ontario; essential information on the mode(s) of transmission, case management, and infection prevention and control considerations (including diagnostic testing); and a real-life outbreak scenario, including detection, confirmation, investigation, and effective interventions.*