

9 immunizations required in Ontario schools

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[Andrea Gordon](#) Toronto Star, Thu Oct 30, 2014

Immunization has rendered most vaccine-preventable diseases so uncommon that many Canadians don't know much about them. Here are the nine immunizations required for entry to school in Ontario:

Measles: highly contagious virus causing rash, high fever, cold symptoms. Most complications occur in children. Rare severe cases can lead to hospitalization, blindness, hearing loss, encephalitis, or death.

Mumps: Virus that spreads easily, causing fever and painful swelling of glands near ears and lower jaw. Usually mild in children and more complicated for adults. But it can lead to damage of the central nervous system, meningitis, or deafness and in rare cases inflammation of joints and organs.

Rubella: A virus that tends to be mild in children but is dangerous to women in early pregnancy, causing birth defects or fetal death.

Chicken pox: A common and contagious childhood virus that can be dangerous for babies, seniors or those with compromised immune systems such as cancer patients. Fever followed by rash that turns into itchy fluid-filled blisters. Those infected can later develop a painful flare-up called shingles on one part of the body.

Pertussis: Bacterial infection causing coughing so severe that it leads to vomiting and sounds like a high-pitched whoop. Can be very dangerous to infants, who may require hospitalization because excess mucous blocks their small airways.

Diphtheria: A serious disease causing sore throat, fever and chills caught through coughing and sneezing. It can lead to nerve damage, heart failure, breathing problems and death.

Polio: Highly infectious virus that affects the central nervous system, causing flu-like symptoms and fatigue leading to paralysis or death. Was among the most feared diseases in the first half of the last century.

Meningococcal disease: A serious infection that can be passed along by a healthy carrier or someone sick with it. Its most serious form is meningitis, causing swelling to the lining of the brain and spinal cord. It can also cause blood poisoning. Sudden high fever, severe headache, rash and stiff neck. Can lead to seizures and death.

Tetanus: A serious illness caused by bacteria most frequently contacted as the result of a wound. But it is not infectious.