



Information Leaflet – Vaccines and Blood Tests

Nursing, Occupational Therapy, Physiotherapy Radiography & Social Work

The immunity requirements for these courses are as follows:

- Tuberculosis
- Varicella
- Measles and Rubella
- Hepatitis B*

*Immunisation for social workers only for those exposed to unfixed human blood or tissues.

Medicine, Midwifery & Paramedic

The immunity requirements for these courses is the same as those above, with additional blood tests to test for infection as follows:

- Hepatitis C
- HIV
- Hepatitis B Surface Antigen

Information You Should Know

Dignity, respect and confidentiality is of the upmost importance in this process, in this regard please note:

- You will not be required to undress but you will need to expose your arm for the blood test/vaccine. It is recommended that you wear clothing which will allow for this procedure.
- Should you wish to discuss a matter in private please inform a member of staff at the earliest opportunity or contact Occupational Health in advance of the session.

We use registered nurses and trained phlebotomists who will adhere to relevant guidance, including Higher Educational Occupational Physicians/Practitioners (HEOPS), the Green Book and World Health Organisation (WHO) guidance.

Vaccines

Vaccines are given to provide immunity and to protect you and others whilst you are on placement/training. Vaccination dates are scheduled into your timetable. You must attend these scheduled vaccination sessions so that you are cleared for placement. Failure to do so is likely to result in a delay in commencement of your placement.

Please note: in the event of a vaccine shortage alternative provisions will be put in place.

Blood Tests

Blood tests screen for diseases/immunity as required for your placement/training. The tests include:

- Tuberculosis (test for infection)
- Hepatitis B surface antigen (test for infection)
- HIV (test for infection)
- Hepatitis C (test for infection)
- Hepatitis B surface antibodies (test for immunity following vaccination)
- Varicella (test for immunity)

Your blood test results will be sent directly back to Occupational Health and any further tests or follow-up will be determined and actioned accordingly.

Hepatitis B Vaccine

Hepatitis B is transmitted from blood and bodily fluids.

A course of Hepatitis B consists of three vaccines given over a six-month period with the following intervals: 0 (first attendance), 1 month and 6 months.

Sometimes an accelerated course is given which consists of: 1st, 2nd and 3rd vaccinations each one month

apart, followed by a booster at 12 months. Both courses are followed by a blood test conducted after four weeks of completion of the course. This blood test is to check whether you have developed enough antibodies to the vaccine. Occasionally more doses of the vaccine need to be given, as advised by Occupational Health.

You will not be protected against Hepatitis B until you have fully completed the course. It is therefore important that you attend all vaccination appointments.

Varicella

This vaccine protects against varicella (commonly known as chicken pox). An initial immunity check is conducted via a blood test unless you have confirmed evidence of your disease history. If you are **not** immune, you will be required to have the varicella vaccinations.

A course of 2 vaccinations will be given four weeks apart. It is important to complete the course for full protection.

The varicella vaccine is live and therefore cannot be given to pregnant women as it may harm the foetus. It also cannot be given to people who are immunosuppressed, either due to disease (including HIV) or medication. You may not develop full immunity until six weeks after the second vaccination. You must avoid medications containing salicylate (e.g. aspirin) for six weeks following vaccination, and females must avoid pregnancy for three months following each vaccination.

Tuberculosis (BCG)

This vaccine protects against Tuberculosis (TB) and is for students not previously vaccinated. The TB vaccine is live and therefore cannot be given to pregnant women as it may harm the foetus. The TB vaccine cannot be given to people who are immunosuppressed, either due to disease (including HIV) or medication.

You will require a blood test (IGRA). If, based on the blood test results, you require the vaccine it must be administered within 3 months of the blood test. Certain Placement settings require BCG vaccine if you are allocated to these areas you will be offered the BCG vaccine.

If you have no intention of having the vaccine please state before the blood test is undertaken.

Measles & Rubella

It is a requirement of all clinical courses to have immunity to measles and rubella. You will therefore

need to provide evidence of this to the Occupational Health Department as one of the following: disease history, blood test results to show positive immunity or 2 MMR vaccines (or equivalent individual vaccines).

UK students should check with their General Practitioner (GP) to find out if they have been vaccinated. If you have not been vaccinated these are available through the NHS via your GP.

If you cannot obtain evidence of immunity you will be required to have 2 MMR vaccines given four weeks apart.

Please note: if you do not know whether you have been vaccinated for MMR, having more than two doses will not cause you any harm.

Covid-19 Vaccine

It is a requirement under the amendment to the Department of Health and Social Care laid down by the Health and Social Care Act 2008 (Regulated Activities) Regulations 2014 ("the 2014 Regulations"), that a person provides evidence that they have been vaccinated with a complete course of an authorised vaccine against COVID-19 or, if otherwise vaccinated against coronavirus is also within a specified time period vaccinated with a single dose of an authorised vaccine, or subject to specific exemption. The only exemption to this is clinical exemption.

You will be required to evidence your status with acceptable evidence as detailed in the email from the Occupational Health Service.

International students

If you are an international student you should try to obtain evidence of vaccinations prior to travelling to the UK. Depending on the University course you will be required to have UK laboratory validated blood tests to verify immunity to certain diseases.

**If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact the Occupational Health Department on:
01530 239190**

