

UWO Hepatitis B Immunization Policy

PURPOSE

The Hepatitis B Immunization Policy is designed to ensure that all students, staff and faculty of the University who handle potential sources of infection are informed of the hazards associated with exposure to Hepatitis B virus, and are offered immunization.

RESPONSIBILITY

Compliance with the policy is the responsibility of the Dean, Budget Unit Head or individual researcher. It is the responsibility of the foregoing to notify Staff/Faculty Health Services whenever a person under their jurisdiction requires immunization under this policy.

DEFINITIONS

(a) Potential Source of Infection

Hepatitis B can be transmitted from exposure to human blood or blood products, or all body fluids, including, but not limited to, saliva, cerebrospinal fluid, tears and urine.

(b) Persons at Risk

For the purposes of this policy persons at risk are defined as belonging to one of the categories below:

Category I

Employees who have a high risk of exposure to Hepatitis B in the course of their employment and who are also in contact with patients or other individuals in the course of their employment in circumstances where there is a possibility of passing Hepatitis B to the patient or individual. Examples include, but are not limited to, surgeons, dentists and child psychologists.

Category II

Employees who have a high risk of exposure to Hepatitis B in the course of their work but who are not in close contact with patients or others in circumstances where there is a risk of passing on Hepatitis B. Examples include, but are not limited to, histologists, pathologists and laboratory technicians working with infected tissues or whole blood.

Category III

Employees whose employment causes minimal risk of exposure to Hepatitis B, and which does not bring them into contact with others in circumstances where Hepatitis B may be passed on.

REQUIREMENTS

(a) Employees (Faculty and Staff)

All employees included in Category I are to be referred, by their supervisor, to the Staff/Faculty Health Services for a review of their exposure to Hepatitis B and the risk associated with it. Following this review an assessment of their immunity (titre) will be provided, if indicated. Immunization will be provided to those requiring it.

In the event that an employee in Category I does not wish to be immunized, this decision must be discussed with the University physician, and a statement must be signed indicating that immunization was offered and refused.

All employees included in Category II are to be referred to the Staff/Faculty Health Services for a review of their exposure to Hepatitis B and the risk associated with it. Following this review an assessment of their immunity (titre) will be offered, if indicated. If there is no evidence of immunity, immunization will be offered. In the event that immunization is not desired, the employee will be asked to sign a statement indicating that immunization has been offered and refused.

All employees in Category III may request a review of their exposure to Hepatitis B and the risk associated with it at any time, through Staff/Faculty Health Services. Should there be a significant risk associated with their employment, they will be assigned to the appropriate Category.

(b) Students

Any students whose course work or research work would place them into a Category equivalent to one of those defined for employees (above) will be notified, by their Dean or Department chairman, at the beginning of the academic year. Those determined to be equivalent to Categories I or II will be advised to obtain immunization. This immunization may be arranged through their family physician, or through Student Health Services.

(c) Annual Review

All employees at risk will have an annual health review, which may include a titre to assess their immunity to hepatitis B. The health review will include health teaching, and a booster shot if indicated by the titre.

(d) Cost

In the case of employees of the University in Category I and II, the cost of the immunization program and the annual reassessment shall be borne by Staff/Faculty Health Services. The costs of the immunization and reassessment programs for Category III employees will be borne by the employee.

In the case of students, the cost of immunization will be borne by the student.