

GENERAL MEDICAL 8.0

Occupational Health Services -- 8.2

Employee Immunity for Varicella -- 8.2.d

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Signature:

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POLICY

All employees, including part-time, contractual and volunteers, shall provide proof of immunity to varicella. Those employees who are not immune shall be offered varicella vaccine.

APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to Local Health Department, Regional and Central Office personnel.

PURPOSE

To protect the health of employees and all persons receiving services from public health departments.

PROCEDURE

All employees shall be asked to provide evidence of immunity to varicella. Persons who have reliable histories of varicella are considered immune. Those who do not have such histories are considered susceptible and can be tested to determine immune status, or can be vaccinated without testing. Vaccine should be offered at no cost to the employee with a series of two (2) doses 4 to 8 weeks apart. If a susceptible employee refuses immunization, a refusal statement must be signed and placed in her/his personnel file.

Female employees should be asked if they are pregnant and advised to avoid pregnancy for one month following each dose of vaccine.

Vaccination should be considered for unvaccinated healthcare workers who are exposed to varicella and whose immunity is not documented. However, because the protective effects of post-exposure vaccination are unknown, persons vaccinated after an exposure should be managed in the manner recommended for unvaccinated persons as outlined below.

Exposed unvaccinated employees, or those vaccinated upon exposure, should be tested for seropositivity immediately after exposure to varicella to detect antibody. Varicella is unlikely to develop in persons who have detectable antibody; persons who do not have such antibody can be retested in 5-6 days to determine if an anamnestic response is present, in which case development of disease is unlikely. Persons who remain susceptible should be monitored daily to determine clinical status and managed accordingly.

REFERENCE DOCUMENTS

Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), "Prevention of Varicella," Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), Centers for Disease Control, Vol. 45, No. RR-11, July 12, 1996

OFFICE OF PRIMARY RESPONSIBILITY

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