

## Halton Family Health Centre Walk-In Clinic Infection Prevention and Control (IPAC) Lapse Investigation Questions and Answers

### When did the Health Department learn about this?

Halton Region Public Health Department became aware of the lapse on July 10, 2025, and immediately initiated an investigation.

### What is an infection prevention and control lapse?

An infection prevention and control lapse is when proper infection prevention and control standards and best practices are not followed, putting patient/clients at potential risk of infection.

### What were they doing wrong at the clinic?

Staff did not follow proper infection control practices when using multidose vials for administering local anesthetic medication by injection (freezing) for pain relief during procedures.

As a result, the anaesthetic medication in multidose vials may have been contaminated with blood, and blood-borne infections such as hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV, potentially infecting another person when the multidose vials were used again.

### What is a multidose vial?

A multidose vial is a bottle of medicine that has more than one dose inside. It can be used several times, but each time, a sterile needle and syringe must be used to take the medicine out safely.

### Who is at risk?

Individuals who had a medical procedure that required local anesthetic medication by injection

(freezing) between January 1, 2019 and July 17, 2025 are considered at risk.

### Is there an outbreak?

No. The Health Department is currently not aware of an outbreak of disease in relation to the infection prevention and control lapse at this medical office.

### How do I know if the care I received put me at risk?

If the procedure you had required that you get a local anaesthetic medication by injection you may be at risk. Examples of these procedures include putting in stitches to repair skin tears, intrauterine device (IUD) insertions, endometrial biopsies, skin biopsies, removal of lumps and bumps, partial or complete nail removals and joint injections or aspirations.

### I had a procedure at the clinic that required local anesthetic medication by injection, what should I do?

Halton Region Public Health recommends that affected patients speak with their healthcare provider to discuss getting tested for hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV).

Patients should download the physician letter and pre-filled lab requisition from [halton.ca - IPAC Lapse Disclosure](https://www.halton.ca/ipac-lapse-disclosure) and bring them to their appointment.

### I had a procedure at the clinic but did not receive any local anesthetic medication by injection/freezing, do I need to be concerned?

No, this notification only applies to patients who underwent procedures that required local anesthetic medication by injection.

### Why is the Health Department recommending I see a healthcare provider to discuss testing for hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV?

These viruses can be transmitted from person to person through blood or other body fluids. Improper infection control practices when handling multidose vials carries a low risk of transmitting hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV to patients.

### I am already vaccinated for hepatitis B virus (HBV), should I still see my healthcare provider?

Yes. The Health Department recommends that all patients see their healthcare provider, even if previously vaccinated for HBV. HBV vaccine does not protect against Hepatitis C and HIV. The recommendation remains to discuss testing with your healthcare provider.

### Where can I learn more about hepatitis B, hepatitis C and HIV?

Please visit [halton.ca - Preventing Communicable Diseases: A-Z Index](http://halton.ca - Preventing Communicable Diseases: A-Z Index) for more information.

### What should I do if I don't have a healthcare provider?

Go to a walk-in clinic with the physician letter and laboratory requisition, it is not necessary to visit an emergency department. To obtain a copy of the letter for physicians and the lab requisition, visit [halton.ca - IPAC Lapse Disclosure](http://halton.ca - IPAC Lapse Disclosure).

### Should my partner or other family members be tested?

No, only patients who received local anesthetic medication by injection during a procedure at Halton Family Health Centre Walk- in Clinic

between January 1, 2019 and July 17, 2025, are considered at risk and recommended to see a healthcare provider to discuss testing.

The risk of disease from this situation is very low. Discussing testing with a healthcare provider is recommended as a precaution.

### What does the testing involve?

Blood samples are collected and sent to a laboratory for analysis.

### Who will pay for the tests?

The Ontario Health Insurance Plan (OHIP) covers the cost of the tests. There may be a cost associated with the assessment and testing if you are not covered by OHIP or private insurance.

### How will I receive my test results?

The healthcare provider that ordered the testing will receive the results and provide them to you. The time to receive results varies. Please contact the healthcare provider who ordered the test for results.

### What will happen if the test results are positive?

Your healthcare provider will review your results and offer guidance. Since hepatitis B, hepatitis C, and HIV are reportable diseases, your results will also be shared with Halton Region Public Health, and a public health nurse will follow up with you.

### What happens if my test results are negative?

Discuss with your healthcare provider about how your results will be provided to you.

### Is this issue related to a specific healthcare worker?

Since this issue is related to the use of multidose vials becoming contaminated, even healthcare providers who were following the proper infection

control measures when using these vials may have unknowingly exposed patients.

contact the Health Department at (905) 825-6000 or 311.

### Does this IPAC lapse include the family health practice physicians?

No. This IPAC Lapse only includes the walk-in clinic during the specified time period and does not include procedures or care received at the Halton Family Health Centre family practice physician offices.

### Is it safe to visit this clinic now?

Halton Region Public Health has conducted follow-up visits to the clinic and confirmed that the recommended practices for using multidose vials have been implemented and are being followed. Any implicated multidose vials have been removed from the clinic.

### Does the Health Department routinely inspect medical offices?

No. The Health Department does not routinely inspect medical offices or offices of other regulated health professionals. Inspections are completed in response to a complaint or as part of a reportable disease investigation.

### Will the Health Department provide updates on the issue?

Updates will be considered as required, based on whether new information is obtained.

### Who can I contact if I have health-related questions?

Contact your healthcare provider if you have questions about your health.

### Who can I contact if I have more questions about this investigation?

For more information about the investigation, please visit [halton.ca](https://www.halton.ca) - [IPAC Lapse Disclosure](#) or