Frequently asked Questions and Answers about Immunizations and Titers

Q. What immunizations are required?

A. Please visit the Student Health Website (www.utmb.edu/studenthealth) for the Immunization and Titer requirements AND the Immunization Form. Required immunizations:
1. Meningitis Vaccine or proof of Exemption, if 21 or under the first day of class.
2. Tdap (Tetanus, Diptheria and Pertussis) Adult formulation
3. Either 2 MMR (Measles, Mumps, Rubella) vaccine (separated by one month) OR proof of positive antibody titers
4. A TB skin test (PPD) within 12 months of first day of school, unless a history of a positive skin test, then no TB skin test. We still need the date of the positive test and a record of a clear Chest Xray (only if history of positive test)
5. Either a positive antibody Varicella titer (Chicken Pox) OR 2 Varicella (Chicken Pox) Vaccine (separated by one month)
6. A series of 3 Hepatitis B vaccines and a positive (quantitative for UTMB students) Hepatitis B antibody titer.

Q. When are my immunizations due to be turned in? The literature says that they were due _________ but that date is passed?

A. The immunizations are due on the date that was in your packet. If you have not turned any immunization in at all please do so immediately. If you are working on completing your immunization requirements, please send updates in as you get them.

Q. Where do I send my immunizations?

A. Refer to your school’s direction on the process to submit your immunization records/requirements to.

Q. Why do I need to turn in all these immunizations?

A. The reason for getting all this in as soon as possible is to prevent delays in starting your clinical rotation. Your clinical rotations start soon after the beginning of the semester. Your program coordinator will have a definite date that your clinical rotations start.

Q. What if I am in the middle of completing a series of Hepatitis B or any other series OR if I just need to get my titers drawn and turned in? Will this keep me from starting school?

A. If you are in the middle of completing a requirement, this won’t keep you from starting school. You need to continue on the schedule recommended by your provider. You should turn documentation in as you receive updates on your vaccines or titers. However, if you are due for a booster or titer and have not had this done, it could keep you from going to your clinical site until you have had that specific update. As long as you are progressing with your requirements on schedule most clinical sites will let you participate.

Q. Do I need the meningitis vaccine?

A. If you will be 21 or younger the first day of school, you are required to show proof of a meningitis vaccine. The vaccine must be within 5 years of the first day of school and have been received in at least 10 days before the first day of school. You will not be allowed to attend orientation, register, or start classes without proof of this vaccine. An option that you have, is to claim an exemption for the vaccine. The only exemption form that is acceptable to submit is found on the www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/school website. The form must be notarized within 90 days of the first day of school and received at least 10 days before the first day of school.

Q. What is a titer?
A. A titer may be an unfamiliar term for you. A titer is a blood test to check for immunity to a disease. An example is Hepatitis B. After your 3 immunizations of Hepatitis B vaccine (these could have been given when you were young), you will need to have a Hepatitis B antibody titer. If the result is positive, that means you have immunity. If it is negative or equivocal, you will need more vaccine. Email Student Health at stdwappt@utmb.edu or call Student Health at 409-747-9508 for more information.

If you know that you have had the Chicken Pox disease, you will need a Varicella (Chicken pox) antibody titer. This will show if you have immunity to Chicken pox. If you know you have never had Chicken pox, you will need to have a series of 2 Varicella (Chicken pox) vaccine. These shots are separated by one month.

Q. What is a PPD or TB skin test?
A. This is an immunization that is placed under the skin of your forearm. If there is a reaction within 72 hours, it could mean that you were exposed to Tuberculosis in the past. You need to have had this placed and read, at least 12 months before the first day of school.

IMPORTANT: If you have had a history of a positive reading in the past, the date that you turned positive and proof of a clear chest x-ray before starting school is required.

Q. How do I contact Student Health and Counseling if I have questions?
A. Sending an email to stdwappt@utmb.edu is a really good way to contact our staff. You can also call 409-747-9508.

Q. What if I want to make an appointment to be seen in Student Health and Counseling?
A. You can schedule online at http://mychart.utmb.edu/mychart/openscheduling to make an appointment.

As you can see, completing all the requirements takes time.
All these requirements are to protect you and your patients.