

Guidelines for Vaccination as an Offer to EMPLOYEES at AU HEALTH

Applies to (whom): The guidelines apply to all employees at Health. Employees who are also employed in the healthcare sector and covered by other vaccination rules are excluded from these guidelines.

Non-employees, i.e. persons affiliated to AU Health and who do not receive a salary, are in general not covered. Students, trainees, etc must, if necessary, pay for the vaccinations themselves.

In general: The risk of micro-organisms must primarily be reduced by means of the occupational exposure measures, including a thorough training of the employees. Only if it is assessed that an infection cannot be ruled out, for example in accidents, a vaccination is needed (1).

REQUIREMENTS for vaccination: For employees whose employment mainly consists of handling, treating or analysis of waste water (sewage) and sewage sludge, etc., the Working Environment Authority sets requirements that these employees must be vaccinated against hepatitis A (liver inflammation), tetanus and polio (infantile paralysis) (3). The vaccinations must be documentable.

RECOMMENDATION regarding vaccination

Hepatitis A (contagious hepatitis A) is caused by a virus that transmits through the mouth (faeco-orally). Virus is shed with stool and by touching contaminated objects by hand or through water it can be brought to the mouth, after which the infection occurs, and the virus then multiply in the liver.

Employees should be vaccinated against **Hepatitis A**, if they, following a specific assessment, are estimated to have a persistent risk of infection and where the risk cannot be removed by taking occupational exposure measures. The Danish Working Environment Authority requires that employees are vaccinated against hepatitis A (contagious hepatitis) (3) if their employment primarily or mainly consists in handling, processing or analysis of waste water (sewage), sewage sludge, etc., and that the vaccination must be documentable.

Hepatitis B (serum hepatitis) is caused by a virus and is contagious through blood and body fluids from persons who are contagious. In principle, the infectious routes of hepatitis B and HIV are equivalent. Hepatitis B virus, however, is many times more contagious than HIV. In contrast to the HIV virus, Hepatitis B virus is also stable outside the body for at least a week. The risk of transmission of disease is especially related to blood contaminated sharp or pointed objects.

In its guidance (2), the Danish Health and Medicines Authority recommends vaccination of, among others, employees in and outside the healthcare system, who have a significant risk of transmission of disease and stab wounds, e.g. by sharps injuries with blood contaminated needles, knives, etc.

“Post exposure prophylaxis” exists, i.e. a possibility of treatment immediately after exposure to contagion in case an employee has not been vaccinated. More detailed description of actions to be taken by sharps injuries including cleaning of wounds can be read in (2.4).

Tetanus is caused by a bacterium; whose spores are widespread in soil and contaminated water (e.g. sewage). The bacterium can be found in the intestines of animals and humans without giving cause to

disease. Contagion occurs mostly through cuts/wounds on the arms and legs. Often the contagion occurs through small wounds, which the injured person considers insignificant, for example, a small piece of shrapnel that creates a bit of inflammation, which consumes oxygen locally in the tissue, whereby the low-oxygen conditions is created that is necessary for the tetanus spores to multiply and cause disease.

The Working Environment Authority requires that employees whose employment primarily or mainly consists of work with handling, processing or analysis of waste water (sewage), sewage sludge, etc., are vaccinated against tetanus (tetanus) and that the vaccination must be documentable (3).

The practice at Health is that employees who work in animal lab facilities on a daily basis, including animal technicians, are vaccinated due to the risk of bite. However, here there is also 'post exposure' prophylaxis.

Influenza vaccinations are not offered at the Health faculty.

Practical matters (how): Employees can go to their own doctor to be vaccinated if the employee in consultation with the occupational health and safety representative and group leader finds that a vaccination is required or advisable, see above. Expenses will be paid by the employer. Specifically, this means that the departments pay the cost for employees employed by the department, while the costs concerning staff employed on external funding must be covered by the external funding or by the annual budget of the group leader.

Vaccinations paid by the employer is not subject to tax.

Decided by HE FAMU 21. June 2018

Sources:

1. Applicable guidelines from the Danish Working Environment Authority guideline, [c. 0.18](#) and [c. 0.15](#).
2. [Guidance on HIV \(Human Immunodeficiency Virus\) and Hepatitis B and C viruses, 2013](#)
3. Vaccination of persons who are working with sewage sludge and waste water. [AT guidelines d.2.14-1, January 2005](#)
4. [AT guideline, Sharps injuries.](#)