OSCE checklist for immunisation

An OSCE checklist for immunisation covers checking the schedule and the child's health, preparing the vaccine safely, giving it by the right route and site, observing for reactions and recording it with advice for the parent.

OSCE checklist for immunisation: steps to practise

1. Wash your hands, introduce yourself, and confirm the child's identity (name and date of birth) with the parent and the record.
2. Check which vaccines are due on the national schedule, and check that there is a valid prescription or protocol for each one.
3. Ask about allergies, including any serious reaction to a previous dose or vaccine ingredient and latex, about any current illness with fever, and about conditions or treatment that weaken the immune system.
4. Explain the benefits and the common side effects, answer questions, and obtain consent from the person with parental responsibility.
5. Check the vaccine: name, dose, expiry date and appearance, and that it has been stored in the cold chain until it is needed.
6. Prepare the vaccine as the product instructions say, using a new sterile needle and syringe for each person.
7. Ask the parent to hold the child securely, choose the right site and route for each vaccine (for example the outer thigh for an intramuscular vaccine in an infant, and the mouth for oral vaccines), and clean the skin only if visibly dirty, as your policy says.
8. Give the vaccine and put the used needle and syringe straight in the sharps bin without recapping, then wash your hands.
9. Make sure anaphylaxis equipment and medicines are ready, watch for any immediate reaction, and if one happens call for help and follow the anaphylaxis protocol. Ask the family to stay for any observation period your policy sets.
10. Record the vaccine, batch number, expiry date, site, route, date and your name, and explain what to expect, when to seek help and when the next dose is due.

What candidates commonly forget

- Not checking allergies and previous reactions
- Not checking the expiry date and the cold chain
- Not having anaphylaxis equipment ready
- Reusing needles or recapping
- Not recording the batch number and site
- Not giving advice on side effects and the next dose

Local policy comes first

This is our own practice checklist. Your college, hospital or country may do some steps differently. Where local policy and this list disagree, follow local policy. The schedule and vaccine sites depend on your country, so use the national schedule your course teaches.

Practise the hands-on steps with a classmate or in a skills lab, because an AI patient cannot watch your technique. You can practise the talking part with an AI patient, and try one station free with no sign-up. Next, try A parent unsure about her son's measles vaccine. Back to the child health nursing OSCE page: child health nursing OSCE, or see the full OSCE checklist list.

Common questions

What is the OSCE checklist for immunisation?

Confirm identity, check the schedule, prescription, allergies and health, explain and get consent, check the vaccine and cold chain, prepare, give by the correct route and site, dispose of sharps, watch for reactions, record and advise.

Where do infants get injections?

Many national schedules use the outer thigh for infants, with specific sites for specific vaccines. Use your own national schedule.

What if a child has a mild cold?

A minor illness without fever is not usually a reason to delay. A child who is acutely unwell with a fever may need the vaccine postponed. Check with the nurse in charge and follow your policy.

Sources

- UKHSA: Immunisation against infectious disease (the Green Book)
- WHO: vaccines and immunization
- NHS: vaccinations and when to have them

Checked 2026-11-13. Fees and rules change, so confirm them with the regulator before you book.