

Questions and Answers about Medical Examination

Requirements for Short-Term Students

2023.05.10

Q1 : Is a medical examination mandatory for short-term students?

A1 : In the past, rubella and tuberculosis outbreaks originating from foreign students have occurred on campus. Therefore, in order to ensure students' health, schools are advised to ask short-term students (foreign students, including students studying Mandarin, who intend to stay in Taiwan for more than three months, but less than 6 months, overseas Chinese students, and Chinese students who intend to stay in Taiwan for more than two months, but less than 6 months) to do a medical examination.

Q2 : What are the standard items in the required medical examination?

A2 : Examination items include:

1. Proof of Positive Measles and Rubella Antibody Titers or Measles and Rubella Immunization Certificates (alternative) :

(1) Students may present their childhood measles and rubella immunization record (The document is acceptable as long as the vaccines were given no earlier than 12 months of age) or proof of positive measles and rubella antibody titers (the test date must be no more than 5 years from the present) .

(2) Students may choose not to take the antibody test and proceed directly with the measles and rubella immunization or choose to receive the immunization only after the antibody test turns out to be negative.

(3) Students may choose to take the test in their home country in advance or within 14 days after arriving in Taiwan.

2. Chest X-ray for Tuberculosis:

(1) Students provide their chest X-ray examination report for tuberculosis.

(2) Students may choose to take a chest X-ray examination for tuberculosis in their home country before coming to Taiwan or they can get a chest X-ray within 14 days after arriving in Taiwan.

Q3 : Why are short-term students required to have proof of positive antibody tests for measles and rubella or measles and rubella immunization certificates?

A3 :

1. Measles and rubella are highly contagious and can be transmitted through air, droplets, or contact with nasopharyngeal mucus of infected individuals. As the infections remain serious in neighboring China, Southeast Asia, and other surrounding countries, these viruses may enter the country through different means, such as business trips, study tours, family visits, sightseeing. Schools are especially prone to transmission and clustering of the two diseases.
2. In 2008, two clusters of rubella infections occurred at schools in Taiwan. One overseas Chinese student in each cluster was infected with rubella in their place of residence and developed symptoms after coming to Taiwan and transmitted the disease to seven and eight other overseas Chinese students, respectively, in their schools. In addition, in 2011, several foreign students contracted rubella when they returned to their home countries to visit relatives or during their stay in Taiwan.
3. One dose of the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine can offer 95%-100% protection, which is the most effective way to prevent measles and rubella. While common local reactions following a vaccination, such as redness, swelling, and pain, may occur, serious adverse reactions are extremely rare after MMR vaccination.

Q4 : Why are short-term students required to undergo a chest X-ray examination for tuberculosis?

A4 :

1. Tuberculosis is an infectious disease transmitted through the air/droplets. People who take the same courses as TB cases are at risk of infection. In Taiwan, a foreign student had been diagnosed with multidrug-resistant tuberculosis (MDR-TB) and later found to have come into contact with more than 100 students on campus.
2. One foreign student who recently came to Taiwan for short-term Mandarin courses did not undergo a chest X-ray examination for tuberculosis upon arrival. This student was later diagnosed with pre-extensively drug-resistant tuberculosis (pre-XDR-TB). The case's failure to seek diagnosis and medical treatment early could increase the risk of transmission and jeopardize the health of teachers and students around this student.
3. Therefore, students coming to Taiwan are advised to undergo a chest X-ray examination for tuberculosis in their home country or within 14 days after arrival in Taiwan. If students choose to receive their chest X-ray examination in Taiwan, their schools should arrange for them to go to a designated hospital for foreigner health examinations or incorporate the examination into the health examination for new students.

Q5 : If there are unqualified items in the health examination of short-term students, what should they do?

A5 :

1. Proof of Positive Measles and Rubella Antibody Titers or Measles and Rubella Immunization Certificates:
(1) Students who do not present their childhood Measles and

Rubella immunization record, may choose not to take the antibody test and directly received the Mumps vaccine or the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine. However, if a person is determined by the doctor to have vaccine contradictions, he/she shall be exempt from vaccination.

(2) If the results of Measles and Rubella antibody tests are negative or undetermined, MMR vaccine must be vaccinated at their own expense. However, if a person is determined by the doctor to have vaccine contradictions, he/she shall be exempt from vaccination.

(3) MMR vaccine contradictions are as follows:

- ✧ Someone who has known severe allergies to egg protein or the vaccine component shall be exempt from vaccination.
- ✧ Pregnancy.
- ✧ Someone who has known severe immuno-deficiency, including AIDS patients with severe immuno-deficiency, individuals with congenital immuno-deficiency, patients with malignant tumor such as leukemia, lymphoma etc., and patients receiving chemotherapy, immunosuppressive drugs, or high-dose steroids.

2. Chest X-ray for Tuberculosis:

(1) For suspected Tuberculosis cases, further tests at the chest outpatient department of a designated institution arranged by the school are necessary. The list of designated institutions can be found on the Taiwan CDC website: www.cdc.gov.tw, under Diseases & Conditions Foreigners' Health The list of designated institutions of chest X-ray examination for tuberculosis (for re-examination) (shortened URL: <https://gov.tw/U63 U63>) .

(2) For confirmed Tuberculosis cases, they can receive treatment during their legal stay in Taiwan. They should cooperate with the

Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course (DOTS) service provided by their local health authority which will assist them in completing the anti-tubercular medical treatment for 6~9 months. A care worker will be appointed to dispatch medicine and witness the patient take the drug to observe medication side effects.

- (3) Tuberculosis cases, such as those diagnosed with Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB), after starting the Tuberculosis treatment, are advised to receive further treatment in their home country after completing their preliminary treatment in Taiwan and their sputum result changes to negative.
- (4) Regardless of whether they are enrolled under the national health insurance program, health authorities will provide a tuberculosis "smart card" to assist them in the treatment of tuberculosis during their stay in Taiwan.

Q6 : Is the use of the Medical Examination Form for Short-term Students mandatory?

A6 : The form is used for reference only. Students may choose to submit certificates of Measles and Rubella immunization (or the positive titer laboratory result) and the chest X-ray examination report to suffice the medical examination requirements.

Q7 : What action should be taken if a short-term student has not gone through a health examination?

A7 : It is recommended that the school incorporate the examination into the health examination for new students or request the student undergo one.

Q8 : Are the regulations for the medical examination of short-term students the same for different schools?

A8 : The regulations may vary from school to school. Please follow the regulations of the school you are attending.

Q9 : Are the regulations for the medical examination of short-term students the same for different schools?

A9 : If the immunization has been completed in your home country, you may bring the certificate of immunization to Taiwan, and submit the document at the time of school registration to avoid re-taking the vaccine. (The document is acceptable as long as the vaccines were given no earlier than 12 months of age.)

Q10 : If I have already received the Mumps vaccine, can I still receive the Measles and Rubella vaccines?

A10 :

1. Anyone who has received the Mumps vaccine or the Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) vaccine can receive the MMR vaccine repeatedly without incurring harms. However, if a person is determined by the doctor to have vaccine contradictions, he/she shall be exempt from vaccination. The common side effects of the MMR vaccine include redness, swelling, and pain at the injection site. The possibility of developing adverse reactions is extremely low.
2. MMR vaccine contradictions are as follows:
 - ✧ Someone who has known severe allergies to egg protein or the vaccine component shall be exempt from vaccination.
 - ✧ Pregnancy.
 - ✧ Someone who has known severe immuno-deficiency, including AIDS patients with severe immuno-deficiency, individuals with congenital immuno-deficiency, patients with malignant tumor

such as leukemia, lymphoma etc., and patients receiving chemotherapy, immunosuppressive drugs, or high-dose steroids.

Q11 : If I am diagnosed with Tuberculosis after my arrival in Taiwan, can I receive treatment in Taiwan?

A11 :

1. For suspected Tuberculosis cases, further tests at the chest outpatient department of a designated institution arranged by the school are necessary. The list of designated institutions can be found on the Taiwan CDC website: www.cdc.gov.tw, under Diseases & Conditions Foreigners' Health The list of designated institutions of chest X-ray examination for tuberculosis (for re-examination) (shortened URL:[https://gov.tw/U63 U63](https://gov.tw/U63U63)) .
2. For confirmed Tuberculosis cases, they can receive treatment during their legal stay in Taiwan. They should cooperate with the Directly Observed Treatment Short-Course (DOTS) service provided by their local health authority which will assist them in completing the anti-tubercular medical treatment for 6~9 months. A care worker will be appointed to dispatch medicine and witness the patient take the drug to observe medication side effects.
3. Tuberculosis cases, such as those diagnosed with Multidrug-Resistant Tuberculosis (MDR-TB) , after starting the Tuberculosis treatment, are advised to receive further treatment in their home country after completing their preliminary treatment in Taiwan and their sputum result changes to negative.
4. Regardless of whether they are enrolled under the national health insurance program, health authorities will provide a tuberculosis "smart card" to assist them in the treatment of tuberculosis during their stay in Taiwan.

Q12 : What is the legal basis that requires short-term students to take a medical examination?

A12 :

1. According to Article 8 of the School Health Act, all schools shall establish a student health management system and organize student health examinations on a regular basis.
2. According to Article 6 of the Enforcement Rules of School Health Act, the student health examination/management system as provisioned by Paragraph 1, Article 8 of the Act shall include the following matters (excerpts) : student health examination, student health data management and application, other matters provisioned by the competent authorities at all levels, etc.
3. According to Article 36 of the Communicable Diseases Control Act, when communicable diseases occur or are expected to occur, the public shall cooperate and accept the inspections, treatment, immunization or other disease control and quarantine measures conducted by the competent authorities.
4. According to Point 6 of the Review Points of Chinese Education Professionals and Students Coming to Taiwan for Educational Activities (excerpts) : the inviting units should arrange the medical examination for Chinese students who intend to stay in Taiwan for more than two months.