



MOH will be closed July 5th and reopening on Tuesday, July 6th.

Flu Vaccination Planning



As workers transition from working at home to shared workspaces, flu season is expected to be similar to past years. While we have learned that the wearing of masks can dramatically reduce airborne viruses like Covid-19, they can also positively impact rates of influenza and colds. The question remains, will masks return as flu and cold season begins? Not likely unless there is a Covid-19 resurgence.

MOH will once again offer both on-site and in-clinic flu vaccinations, billed to the employer. In late August / early September watch for our communications on how to schedule. Plan for vaccinations in September – October. Vaccinations after that can still have a positive impact but vaccinations before then is too early, meaning the antibodies may not last to the end of the flu season.

Reasonable Suspicion for Supervisor Seminar

A 2-hour virtual seminar with opportunities for live Q&A will be held **Tuesday September 14th, 2021**. An email announcement will go out soon but to be sure the right person(s) in your organization receive it, please ask to be added to that email list by sending a quick message to:

kajohnson@mohonline.com

Drug Testing without THC?

In 2020, the rate of positive post-accident drug tests (6.4%) was higher than positive pre-employment test results (3.7%). Quest Diagnostics, a national testing lab also reports that test results show THC (from marijuana) increased from 3.1% in 2019 to 3.6% in 2020, with much higher rates of increase in states where recreational marijuana is legal. Workplace testing results for ecstasy (MDMA/MDA) grew slightly and propoxyphene remained unchanged, with all other categories (opiates, oxycodone and cocaine) declining.

In this tight hiring market, with more job candidates testing positive for THC, some employers are considering eliminating this drug from their non-DOT drug test panels. If this becomes part of your policy discussions, seek guidance from legal counsel who specialize in employment law and make certain that your drug and alcohol testing policy is updated accordingly.

THC impairment does not decline at a predictable rate like alcohol or other drugs. It depends upon the frequency, quantity and length of use in addition to the drug potency which can vary considerably. THC is stored in body fat which can be released into the bloodstream over time, including under high stress (fight or flight) conditions. For employers who remove THC from their pre-employment test panel, consider still testing for post-accident and reasonable suspicion. Otherwise, when you have an impaired worker, what will be your recourse?

DOT Sleep Evaluations – Part 2

As a follow-up on a brief article in our February 2021 newsletter, MOH and other occupational medicine professionals throughout the country continue to receive inquiries about sleep evaluation referrals during a DOT exam FMCSA - Respiratory Regulation 49 CFR 391.41(b)(5).

While there are a number of factors that normally comprise a sleep referral, the most current national guidelines set by the Motor Carrier Safety Advisory Committee, Medical Review Board from 11/21/2016 established the following (and as of yet unchanged) guidelines for when a certified examiner should refer a patient for sleep evaluation:

1. Individuals with BMI \geq 40 (no other criteria needed) or
2. Individuals with BMO \geq 33 and $<$ 40 plus 3 or more of the following:
 - Hypertension
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - History of stroke, coronary artery disease or arrhythmia
 - Abnormal Mandible: Micrognathia or retrognathia
 - Loud snoring
 - Witnessed apneas (stopped breathing)
 - Small airway using Mallampati classification
 - Neck size $>$ 17" male or $>$ 15.5" female
 - Untreated hypothyroidism
 - Age 42 or above
 - Male or post-menopausal female

MOH Providers have visited this topic numerous times to review any new data or recommendations and to ensure consistency among all providers.

Neither MOH or any of its providers have a direct or indirect interest in referring patients for a sleep evaluation other than the safety and long-term health of drivers and all those who could be affected by a sleep-impaired driver. We do understand the concerns of cost, time and the potential of an ongoing treatment. So while we will encourage drivers to seek out their own source if a sleep evaluation is warranted, MOH does offer the option to be referred to certified sleep professionals who offer multiple locations, flexible schedules and very reasonable rates, taking both insurance and individual payments when insurance is not available.

We understand that there are NRCME examiners who fail to screen for many medical conditions, including obstructive sleep disorders. MOH has made a commitment to rise above the lowest common denominators such as these, in the interests of driver and community safety and health. While a specific "rule" does not yet exist, we believe most employers and individual drivers value our approach using the best available science and sound medical judgment. MOH works hard to ensure that employers are always on the "right" side of any future DOT audits.

Post-offer Physical Ability and Medical Exams

Last month, the League of Minnesota Cities released a 13-page Information Memo titled Physical Ability Tests for City Employees. While written for municipalities, the guidelines on pre-placement testing can apply to all employers. It describes what is considered medical information (physical exams, lab tests, general physical fitness testing) in comparison to job-specific simulations the details of which can be shared with employers. The document also describes how each are considered under the ADA and MHRA (Minnesota Government Data Practices Act). Read it in full at <https://www.mohonline.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/Physical-Ability-Tests-for-City-Employees-LMC-5-25-21.pdf>

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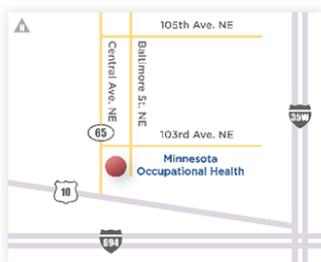
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Our QR codes will direct your google maps right to our clinics!
Just simply point your smart-phone camera to the location you would like to go to.



Blaine



Eagan



Shakopee



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