



Employee Spotlight



Cyndi O., RHIA, CCS, CCS-P

My first experience with On Assignment HIM was in 2008. After 5 years, I decided to work full time for On Assignment HIM. I'm happy I did!

Like most college students, I changed my career goals several times. Finally, I decided on Medical Records, aka Health Information Management. Fortunately, my pre-req nursing courses were transferrable to Human Biology and

Medical Records. I graduated from San Diego Mesa College with an Associate of Science degree in Human Biology and Medical Records Technician. After receiving my A.R.T. certification, I pursued my Bachelor of Science degree at Loma Linda University, in Health Information Management. After passing the R.R.A., I lived and worked in Southern California.

During my 31 years in Health Information Services (yes, I'm dating myself), I've gone from a traditional role as a File Clerk to a Coder to a Coding Supervisor to an HIM Director, then to a non-traditional role as a traveling consultant. As a traveling consultant, I'm able to visit other cities and learn what other facilities are doing in Health Information Management. My career choice was the perfect choice for me.

Tips for Talking to Your Doctor

By: Familydoctor.org editorial staff

Taking an active role in your health care can help you get the best care possible from your doctor. One way to do this is to improve your relationship with him or her. The following are some tips to help you and your doctor improve your health care together.

Talk to your doctor

Be sure to tell your doctor about any current and past health care issues or concerns. It's important to share any information you can, even if you're embarrassed. Give your doctor the following information during the exam:

- Any symptoms you are having.
- Your health history. You can create a "health journal" for yourself on paper or in a notebook, and bring it to your appointments.
- Personal information, including whether you are stressed or if your life is changing.
- Any medicines you are currently taking. Bring them with you or create a list of all your medicines. Include information about when and how often you take the medicine. You should also write down the strength of the medicine. (For example, do you take 150 mg or 200 mg?)
- Any side effects you have from your medicines especially if one makes you feel sick or if you think you may be allergic to it.
- Any vitamins or supplements you take.

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Ask the Expert

Vaccinations—A Shot in the Dark?

Your keyboard, computer mouse, cellphone—what do all these have in common? They are not just tools for communication—they are playgrounds for countless germs and bacteria. In fact, we come in contact with "invaders" everyday—some more harmful than others. So, you make smart diet choices, live an active lifestyle, and wash your hands throughout the day to avoid sickness and promote a healthy life, therefore, no need to worry, right? Wrong. Even with all our efforts, we still get sick because the healthiest of bodies may succumb to illness. Could vaccinations and immunizations be the solution?

Vaccination vs. Immunization—What's the Difference?

To understand the difference between vaccination and immunization, we need to understand the body's immune system. Did you know our bodies naturally have two immune systems—the innate and the adaptive? The *innate* immune system is an ever-ready army of cells with the ability to attack any nonspecific pathogens. As soon as the body detects them, they are destroyed. The *adaptive* immune system's cells are trained to identify and attack certain pathogens. This can occur after the body has been exposed to them and created antibodies equipped with the knowledge to detect and destroy them quickly. The "memory" is used to train B cells (immune cells matured in the bone marrow) and T cells (immune cells matured in the thymus) that get activated during an immune response. Over time we build a self-made, fortified defense system.

We build our adaptive immunity in different ways. *Active immunity* is naturally acquired: after exposure to a pathogen, your body produces antibodies against it. Vaccination mimics this process by artificially introduc-

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We're excited to announce that On Assignment HIM is now Oxford HIM!

Learn more about our new name in our brand new Oxford's Office section located on page 2 of our newsletter.



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Employee of the Month

August 2014



Rosaleen Folan
Associate Recruiter

I was born in Pacifica, California, which is a small town ten minutes outside of San Francisco. I have 3 siblings, who are all very close to me in age. My father was born in Ireland, and my mother has the same heritage, so I guess that makes me a leprechaun. I had the privilege of partaking in Irish dancing competitions at the championship level across the country. I also played soccer and volleyball throughout high school. Although my siblings and I are scattered in different locations, we all manage to keep in touch. Our family gatherings are filled with good stories and laughter.

I attended San Diego State University, where I majored in Communication and International Studies. I was fortunate enough to study abroad in Barcelona, Spain during the spring semester of my Junior year. Following those 4 months, I backpacked throughout Europe and saw a total of 17 different countries. This amazing experience included hiking the Alps, river rafting, bungee jumping, outdoor rock climbing, and more. I met incredible people, tried delicious foods, and experienced many colorful cultures.

Just before having the privilege of joining the On Assignment HIM family, I traveled to Thailand. In this picture I'm bottle feeding a 2-week-old baby tiger. I look forward to working with great staff and coming across endless opportunities with On Assignment HIM.

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ing a dead or weakened pathogen, to produce the same effect. *Passive immunity* is acquired by means of a donor passing along antibodies from a human or animal donor that produced antibodies after it was exposed to a particular pathogen. For a few months after birth while they have no immunity, babies receive their mother's antibodies transferred via the placenta during gestation and through colostrum during breastfeeding. Immunizations mimic this process. There are drawbacks to passive immunity—its effects are short-lived. Once the antibodies weaken and die off, so does the protection they serve, hence, the need for immunization boosters. Remember, the “borrowed antibodies” will not produce any future protection because the natural immunological memory does not occur. (Note: Some animal bites require antivenoms or antitoxins for immediate protection for diseases like rabies and tetanus because they could kill the patient before active immunity is established. Gamma globulins are similarly used to treat hepatitis.)

Is there a risk?

There is no such thing as a risk-free vaccine. In fact, all medical procedures and prescription drugs pose potential risks. It is the responsibility of every patient to educate themselves and make conscious decisions after weighing

Types of vaccines:

- **Live virus vaccines** use the weakened (or attenuated) form of the virus.
- **Killed (inactivated) vaccines** are made from a protein or other small pieces taken from a virus or bacteria.
- **Toxoid vaccines** contain a toxin or chemical made by the bacteria or virus. (You become immune to the harmful effects of the infection rather than the infection)
- **Biosynthetic vaccines** contain manmade substances that are very similar to pieces of the virus or bacteria.

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Oxford's Office

We're excited to announce that **On Assignment HIM is now operating as Oxford HIM!** We're changing our name, but our mission remains the same. We've joined forces with our sister division, Oxford Healthcare IT, to provide a wider service offering and even more career opportunities!

On Assignment HIM has worked with HIM professionals and hiring managers in healthcare facilities nationwide for many years. We've watched the healthcare service industry expand its focus to include digitizing medical records, controlling costs, and implementing the new ICD-10 code set. With so much to balance, we want to help our customers streamline whenever possible.

Through the years, we've partnered with the Oxford Healthcare IT group to provide technical professionals for EMR assessments and implementations that have benefited our client's needs. Now we're making it simple – we've integrated our healthcare IT and HIM services into one! This allows us to better serve our clients by offering them a comprehensive resource and to provide even more career opportunities for our consultants through our expanded client base. As Oxford, we will continue to recruit and place top HIM professionals, but we will also provide healthcare IT consultants to design, build, and implement clinical applications.

In Oxford's Office, a new section of our newsletter, we will provide updates and fun facts to help you get to know us as Oxford HIM. For example... did you know that the original Oxford staffing business was founded in 1984 in a small office inside a schoolhouse in Reading, Massachusetts? Now, the Oxford division of On Assignment has over 20 offices throughout North America and Europe.

If you have questions about our recent transition, please call 800-364-4260.





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the benefits versus the potential risk. However, the health risk of not being vaccinated may outweigh the vaccination side effects. This was evidenced by a whooping cough outbreak in California in 2010 and a measles outbreak in Minnesota in 2011. It was discovered they spread through unvaccinated children.

Make informed decisions about your family's health.

For parents who are deciding on what, if any, vaccinations and immunizations they should request for themselves and their children, you must be educated to all the facts. Sadly, facts are hard to come by, especially since there is so much misinformation produced by the media. Don't be distracted by the debates or by advertisements. Have open, honest discussions with your doctor or pediatrician, and ask about alternatives. Ask for details regarding the ingredients and preservatives in the vaccines.

ICD-10 Coding Corner

Coders, there are big changes when coding vaccinations under ICD-10. The diagnosis codes no longer name the type of vaccine administered. This means we have one code, Z23. These will be represented by the procedure code; note this from the tabular instruction under Z23 *Encounter for immunization*, "Note: procedure codes are required to identify the types of immunizations given." Additional diagnosis codes that represent the reasons for refusing the vaccinations are under category Z28 *Immunization not carried out and underimmunization status*.

Sample of a procedure code for an IM vaccination:

3E0234Z Introduction of Serum Toxoid and Vaccine into muscle, percutaneous

When coding adverse effects of vaccinations, the physician will need to identify the cause of the symptomology. There should be specificity as the procedure (i.e., the injection) causing the condition or the substance injected to cause the reaction.

Examples:

- Patient developed hematoma at the injection site after receiving a flu vaccination.
 - L76.22 *Postprocedural hemorrhage and hematoma of skin and subcutaneous tissue following other procedure*
- Patient began convulsing after the second in the series of three Gardasil vaccinations and is brought to the ED by her family.
 - R56.9 *Unspecified convulsions*
 - T80.62XA *Other serum reaction due to vaccination, initial encounter*



References:

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- <http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/straight-talk-about-vaccination>
- <http://www.nytimes.com/health/guides/specialtopic/immunizations-general-overview/overview.html>
- http://missinglink.ucsf.edu/lm/immunology_module/prologue/objectives/obj02.html
- Marieb, Elaine N. *Essentials of Human Anatomy and Physiology*, tenth ed. San Francisco: Pearson, 2012. Print.

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- Any X-rays, tests results or medical records you have can be brought with you to the appointment.

Ask questions

Don't be afraid to speak up. It's important for you to let your doctor know if you don't understand something. If you don't ask questions, your doctor will think you understand everything he or she has told you. The following are some tips on asking your doctor questions during the exam:

- Ask every time you don't understand something.
- If you have questions before the appointment, just write them down and ask them during the exam. Be sure to write down the most important questions first to make sure they get answered.
- Tell your doctor when you need more time to talk about something. If the doctor isn't available to help, you should be able to talk to a physician assistant or a nurse. If no one else is available, see if you can schedule another appointment to continue your talk.

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Take information home with you

Taking written or recorded information home with you can help you remember information and instructions any time you need to. Your doctor is a good source of accurate information you can trust. The following are types of information you can take home with you:

- Notes that you have taken during the appointment. It's okay for you to write down the information your doctor gives you. Sometimes it helps to bring a friend or family member with you. They can help write down the answers to your questions.
- Written instructions from your doctor.
- A tape recording. Ask your doctor if it's okay to bring a tape recorder to the appointment.
- Brochures or other educational materials. If there aren't any available, ask where you can find some.

Follow up with your doctor

Make sure to follow any instructions your doctor gave you during the appointment, like taking medicine, scheduling a test or scheduling an appointment with a specialist. If you're confused or if you've forgotten some information, it's okay to contact your doctor. The following are some common reasons you may need to call your doctor:

- If you have any questions after the appointment. Ask to leave a message with the doctor or speak with a nurse.
- If you start to feel worse or have problems with your medicine.
- If you had tests and haven't got the results.

From FamilyDoctor.org.

This article can be found here: <http://familydoctor.org/familydoctor/en/healthcare-management/working-with-your-doctor/tips-for-talking-to-your-doctor.html>

Who Knows?

These are the equivalent to the tonsils in the distal part of the small intestine. These contain macrophages meant to capture and destroy bacteria, thereby preventing it from penetrating the intestinal wall.

July 2014 WHO KNOWS?

And the winner is... Lynne S.!

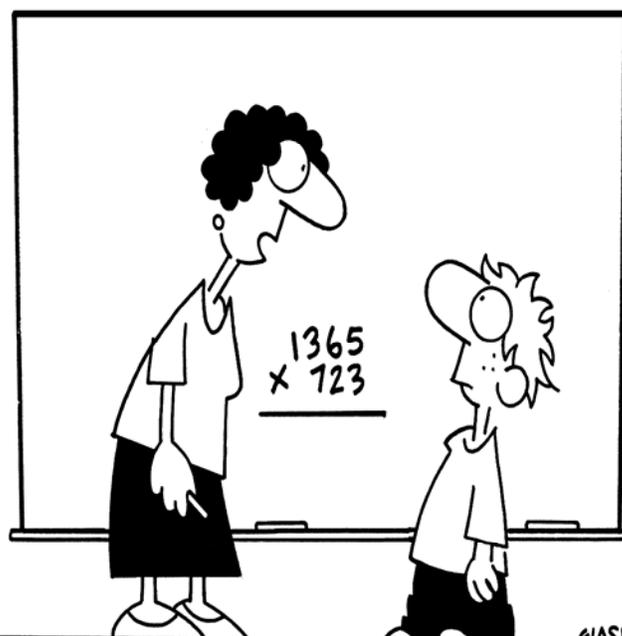
Answer: Urushiol oil

Send your answers to:

kristin.walsh@onassignment.com

All correct answers will be put into a raffle for a chance to win a \$25 gift card from On Assignment HIM!

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"Pretend you're starring in a reality show about a kid who can make his dreams come true if he works hard and gets good grades."