

STATE OF COLORADO

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Dedicated to protecting and improving the health and environment of the people of Colorado

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Colorado Department
of Public Health
and Environment

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Dear Parents of Children in Colorado Child Cares and Preschools (School Year 2011-12)

Immunizations are an important part of our children's health care and Colorado law requires that children attending child care or preschool be vaccinated to prevent vaccine preventable disease. The purpose of the first part of this letter is to let you know which vaccines your child will be **required** to have in order to attend a center or school in the 2011-12 school year. The second part of this letter includes recommended vaccines. The following information also lists websites where you can go to find out more about the diseases and the vaccines.

Required Vaccines

- **Hepatitis B (Hep B)** – Three doses are required for children by 19 months of age to protect against a serious liver disease that can lead to liver damage, liver cancer and death: <http://www.immunize.org/hepb/>
- **Tetanus/Diphtheria/Pertussis (DTaP/DT)** – 4 doses of DTaP or DT are required for children by 19 months of age with a 5th dose at kindergarten entry. DTaP is the vaccine that protects against tetanus (a disease that causes painful muscle stiffness, convulsions and death) and diphtheria (a disease that can cause suffocation, paralysis, heart failure and death). The pertussis portion of the DTaP protects against whooping cough which can lead to pneumonia, seizures and death. DT is for children unable to receive the pertussis part of the vaccine: <http://www.immunize.org/tetanus/>
<http://www.immunize.org/pertussis/> <http://www.immunize.org/diphtheria/>
- **Polio (IPV)** – 3 doses of the vaccine are required by 19 months of age and a 4th dose is needed at kindergarten entry. The vaccine protects against paralysis, typically of the legs, as well as the muscles that help us breathe: <http://www.immunize.org/polio/>
- **Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR)** – 1 dose of this vaccine is required by age 15 months of age to protect against three diseases. (a 2nd dose is required at kindergarten entry). Measles can cause ear infection, pneumonia, seizures, inflammation of the brain and death. Mumps can lead to deafness, meningitis and painful swelling of the testicles or ovaries and occasionally, death. Rubella in pregnant women can cause miscarriage or serious birth defects to the unborn child:
<http://www.immunize.org/measles/> <http://www.immunize.org/mumps/>
<http://www.immunize.org/rubella/>
- **Varicella or Chickenpox (Var)** – 1 dose of this vaccine is required by 15 month of age and a 2nd dose is required at kindergarten entry. (If a child has had chickenpox disease and it is documented by a health care provider, the child has met the varicella requirement). This vaccine protects against chickenpox disease, a rash illness that can lead to skin infections, pneumonia, swelling of the brain and on occasion, death: <http://www.immunize.org/varicella/>
- **Pneumococcal Disease (PCV13)** – If the 1st dose was administered between 2 to 6 months of age, the child will receive 3 doses two months apart and an additional dose between 12 to 15 months of age. If started between 7 to 11 months of age, the child will receive 2 doses, two months apart and an additional dose between 12 to 15 months of age. If the series was started between 12 to 23 months of age, then the child will receive 2 doses, two months apart. Once the child turns 2 years of age there is no requirement

for additional doses of the vaccine. This vaccine protects against pneumonia, bacteremia (a blood infection), meningitis, ear infections and sometimes, death: <http://www.immunize.org/pneumoconj/>

- **Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib)** - If any dose is administered at or over 15 months of age, the requirement is met. If a child begins the series at less than 12 months of age, 3 doses are required, of which, 1 dose must be administered no more than 4 days before the 1st birthday. If the 1st dose is administered at 12 to 14 months of age, 2 doses are required. If a child is 5 years of age or older, the vaccine is no longer required. This disease can affect many organs of the body causing meningitis, epiglottitis which can cause breathing difficulties, bone and joint infections, ear infections and sometimes death: <http://www.immunize.org/hib/>

Recommended Vaccines for the best protection against vaccine preventable diseases

As a parent, it is important to know that in addition to the vaccines **required** by the state of Colorado Board of Health for school entry, there are vaccines that are **recommended** by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). This is the immunization schedule that will best protect your child from even more vaccine preventable diseases.

- **Influenza (Flu)** – Recommended for children 6 months to 18 years of age to prevent respiratory illness caused by the flu that can cause illness and sometimes death: <http://www.immunize.org/influenza/>
- **Hepatitis A (Hep A)** – 2 doses of this vaccine prevent the disease that can affect the liver causing fever, fatigue, loss of appetite, stomach pain, vomiting and in rare cases, death: <http://www.immunize.org/hepa/>
- **Rotavirus** – 3 doses of the vaccine are recommended and protects against an illness that can cause fever, irritability, vomiting and diarrhea: <http://www.immunize.org/rotavirus/>

Included with this letter is the document entitled: “*Minimum Number of Immunization Doses Required- Kindergarten through Grade 12, 2011-12.*” The chart in this document should help you figure out which **required** vaccines your child will need for school as well as the number of doses needed for protection. Exemption information is also included at the end of this document.

Parents often have concerns or want more information on children’s immunization and vaccine safety. An informative website developed for parents can be located at: www.immunizeforgood.com . The Colorado Immunization Section’s website is located at: www.ColoradoImmunizations.com .

Child Care and Preschool directors work hard to make sure your child has all the required vaccines. Your help in providing updated immunization records at registration is greatly appreciated. *Please discuss your child’s vaccination needs with your child’s doctor or local public health agency. (To find your local public health department’s contact information call the Family Health Line at 1-303-692-2229 or 1-800-688-7777). Please bring your child’s immunization records to your child care center or family child care home each time your child receives an immunization.*

Sincerely,

The Colorado Immunization Program
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
303-692-2650

MINIMUM NUMBER OF IMMUNIZATION DOSES REQUIRED
Child Care through Preschool, 2011-12

VACCINE	LEVEL OF SCHOOL/AGE OF CHILD				
	Child Care 2 to 3 months	Child Care 4 to 5 months	Child Care 6 to 14 months	Child Care 15 to 18 months	Preschool 19 months to 4 years
	<i>Vaccines administered ≤4 days before the minimum age are valid</i>				
Pertussis	1	2	3	4	4
Tetanus/Diphtheria	1	2	3	4	4
Polio: A laboratory test showing immunity is acceptable.	1	2	3	3	3
Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib): If any dose is administered at or over 15 months of age, the requirement is met. If a child begins the series at less than 12 months of age, 3 doses are required of which 1 dose must be administered no more than 4 days before the 1 st birthday. If the 1 st dose is administered at 12 to 14 months of age, 2 doses are required. If a child is 5 years of age or older, the vaccine is no longer required.	1	2	3/2	3/2/1	3/2/1
Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR): For school certification, the 1 st dose cannot be administered more than 4 days before the 1 st birthday. A laboratory test showing immunity is acceptable.	0	0	0	1	1
Hepatitis B: A laboratory test showing immunity is acceptable. The 2nd dose must be administered at least 4 wks after the 1st dose. The 3rd dose must be administered at least 16 weeks after the 1st dose and at least 8 weeks after the 2nd dose. The final dose is to be administered no sooner than 16 wks or 6 months of age. (Those students who have not received 3 doses by 7/1/09 are required to follow these minimum intervals)	1	2	2/3	3	3
Varicella (Chickenpox): For school certification, the 1 st dose cannot be administered more than 4 days before the 1 st birthday. Documentation of the disease from a health care provider or a laboratory test showing immunity is acceptable.	0	0	0	1	1
Prevnar/PCV (Pneumococcal Disease): If started at 2 – 6 months of age, 3 doses two months apart are required with an additional dose at 12-15 months of age. If started 7-11 months of age, the child receives 2 doses two months apart with an additional dose between 12-15 months of age. If started at 12-23 months of age, the child will receive 2 doses two months apart. No new or additional doses when the child turns 2 yrs of age.	1	2	4/3/2	4/3/2	4/3/2

You must provide one of the following to your child's school in order to comply with the law:

1. A completed Certificate of Immunization certifying that the student has received minimum immunizations as indicated above.
2. If a student's Certificate of Immunization is not up to date, the parent, guardian, or emancipated student has 14 days after notification to provide documentation that the next required immunization was administered and submit a written plan for completion of any additional required immunizations. If the plan is not completed, the student shall be expelled or suspended from school for non-compliance. Exception to this is a shortage of vaccine.
3. Statement of Exemption to Immunization Law printed on the reverse side of the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment Certificate of Immunization:
 - a) a medical exemption signed by licensed physician stating that the student's physical condition is such that immunizations would endanger life or health or is otherwise medically contraindicated; or
 - b) a religious exemption signed by the parent, guardian, or emancipated student that the student adheres to a religious belief opposed to immunizations; or
 - c) a personal exemption signed by the parent, guardian, or emancipated student that the student adheres to a personal belief opposed to immunizations.

Immunization requirements will be strictly enforced for all students. Students who do not meet the requirements will be denied attendance according to Colorado Revised Statutes 25-4-902.

To learn where to obtain immunizations free or at low cost, call the Family Health Line at 303-692-2229 or 1-800-688-7777 or the Colorado Helpline: 1-877-462-2911.

