

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,

Immunizations are an important part of our children's health care and Colorado law requires that children going to Child Care or Preschool be vaccinated to prevent vaccine preventable disease. The purpose 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 2010-11. Included in the following list are 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 15 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 18 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 8 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 to protect against three diseases. (2 doses are 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 is required for children by 15 month of age and 2 doses are required for kindergarten entry. 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 (Prevnar/PCV)** - If the current age of the child is 2, no new additional doses are required. If the 1st dose was administered at: a) 6 months of age or younger, 3 doses are required at 6 to 14 months and 4 doses are required at 15 to 23 months with 1 dose administered on or after the 1st birthday; b) 7 to 11 months, 2 doses are required at 6 to 14 months and 3 doses are required at 15 to 23 months with 1 dose on or after the 1st birthday; c) 12 to 23 months, 2 doses are required. 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/>

Parents often have concerns or want more information on children's immunizations as well as vaccine safety. The Colorado Immunization Program has a web page for parents with several parent-friendly links that will provide the most accurate information on vaccines: <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/Immunization/family.html> There is also a vaccine safety page at <http://www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/Immunization/family.html>

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 or to locate low cost vaccines contact 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.*

Exemptions

It is the responsibility of the parent(s) to have his or her child immunized unless the child is exempted. A student may be exempted from receiving the required immunization in the following manner:

- 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.

Sincerely,

The Colorado Immunization Program
Website: www.cdphe.state.co.us/dc/immunization
Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment
303-692-2650