

Do you have a child about to enter kindergarten?



What are the changes to previous immunization requirements?

Varicella vaccine – 2 doses

- ▶ Second dose before entering school for the first time
- ▶ Documentation of disease must be from a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician's assistant verifying history of varicella disease. Documentation must include the name of the individual, approximate date or age of infection and health care provider signature.

Polio

- ▶ The booster (4th) dose is required on or after the 4th birthday and before entering school for the first time.

What is the effective date of the new immunization requirements?

July 1, 2015

Why were these immunization recommendations made requirements?

To more closely align NC with the current Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations. Also, immunization requirements increase vaccination coverage therefore reducing the incidence of disease.

Are there other vaccines required or recommended for children entering school for the first time?

Yes, the following vaccines are also required for school entry:

- ▶ DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and acellular pertussis) – 5 doses
- ▶ Hib (haemophilus influenza type B) – 3-4 doses
- ▶ Measles – 2 doses
- ▶ Mumps – 2 doses
- ▶ Rubella – 1 dose
- ▶ Hepatitis B – 3 doses

Although not required for school entry the following vaccines are recommended:

- ▶ Pneumococcal Conjugate
- ▶ Hepatitis A
- ▶ Flu

How are vaccine requirements monitored?

Public, charter, private, and religious schools are responsible for assessing immunization records and required to report the immunization status of kindergarten students in their facility yearly.

What exemptions to immunizations are allowed in North Carolina?

Valid medical and bona fide religious exemptions to immunization are accepted in NC.

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Are the vaccines safe and effective?

Yes. The most common side effects are low fever, pain and swelling at the site of injection. Both vaccines protect about 90% of those who receive them.

Where can I get vaccines and how much do they cost?

You can get the vaccines at your doctor's office or local health department. If your child is insured, the insurance may cover the costs of the vaccines. Contact your health care provider to find out how much the vaccines will cost. If your child is 18 years of age or younger, and meets one of the following qualifications, he or she is eligible to receive the vaccines from the state at no cost:

- ▶ Is eligible for Medicaid,
- ▶ Has no health insurance,
- ▶ Is Native American or Alaskan Native, or
- ▶ Has health insurance, but it does not cover the cost of vaccine.

What should I do?

Contact your child's health care provider or local health department to schedule an appointment to receive needed vaccines.

Be sure that the doctor provides a Certificate of Immunization that documents these vaccines have been received. You will need to show proof of vaccination prior to entering kindergarten.

How do I show proof of vaccination?

A physician, health clinic or local health department must give a Certificate of Immunization to the person who brings the child for immunization. You must give a copy of the Certificate of Immunization to your child's school to show proof of vaccinations.

What if my child is uninsured? How can I get help paying for vaccine administration fees and other health care services my child needs?

Your child may be eligible for Health Check/Medicaid or NC Health Choice – free or low-cost health insurance for children and teens under 19 years old (up to 21 in some cases). Both Health Check and NC Health Choice offer a rich package of benefits. If you are uninsured, apply through your department of social services to find out if you qualify. To learn more about these child health insurance programs, go to www.NCHealthyStart.org.

How can I learn more?

Talk to your school's nurse, your health care provider, or your local health department. You can also call the NC Immunization Branch at **(919) 707-5550** or go online at www.immunize.nc.gov for more information.

