

Immunization Requirements for Children Entering 7th Grade or by 12 Years of Age



What are the new immunization requirements?

Tdap – Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough)

- ▶ One dose of Tdap for individuals who have not previously received it and are entering 7th grade or by 12 years of age whichever comes first.

Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV)

- ▶ One dose for individuals entering the 7th grade or by 12 years of age whichever comes first.

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.

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 7th graders 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.

Why was the 6th grade Tdap requirement changed to 7th grade?

To allow for the simultaneous administration of Tdap, MCV and HPV vaccines as recommended by ACIP.

If my child received a Tdap last year in 6th grade, will they be required to get another dose?

No, only one dose of Tdap is required.

Are the vaccines safe?

Yes. The most common side effects are mild and include pain and swelling at the site of injection.

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.

These vaccines are not required by law, but are strongly recommended for adolescents. For more information about these vaccines, talk to your doctor.

What should I do?

Contact your child’s health care provider or local health department to schedule an appointment to receive Tdap and MCV vaccines.

Be sure that the doctor provides a Certificate of Immunization (shot record) that documents these vaccines have been received. You will need to show proof of vaccination prior to entering 7th grade.

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.

Are there other shots that my child needs?

Yes, the ACIP recommends the following vaccines for 11-12 year olds:

- ▶ Hepatitis A
- ▶ Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- ▶ Flu, and
- ▶ A second dose of Varicella (chickenpox).

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.

