

Minnesota Department of Health

Two Doses of Chickenpox Vaccine Required for Kindergarten and 7th Grade in Fall 2009

What is the new chickenpox requirement?

Beginning in September 2009 parents of children entering kindergarten or 7th grade will need to:

- Have written documentation their child received two chickenpox (varicella) shots or has had the disease, **OR**
- Have written documentation of a medical exemption signed by the child's healthcare provider, **OR**
- File a notarized waiver with their school if they are conscientiously opposed to chickenpox vaccine.

Note: The CDC recommends that if children previously got one dose, they should get a second dose next time they go to the doctor or if there is an outbreak in their school.

What type of documentation is needed to prove a child had chickenpox disease?

A parent must provide documentation in one of the following ways.

- The signature of a provider with the date of the child's varicella illness, **OR**
- The signature of a provider with a parent's or legal guardian's description of the child's varicella disease history that is indicative of past varicella infection, **OR**
- The signature of a provider or a representative of a public clinic with laboratory evidence of the child's varicella immunity; **OR**
- On or before August 31, 2010, the signature of the child's parent or legal guardian with the year that the child had the varicella disease. This option expires September 1, 2010.

Six good reasons to vaccinate your child against chickenpox

1. The chickenpox virus spreads easily from person to person, through the air or by contact with fluid from chickenpox blisters.
2. One child in 10 has serious complications from chickenpox. It can lead to severe skin infection, scars, pneumonia, brain damage, or death. Children who are being treated with steroids for asthma or other illnesses are more susceptible to severe complications and death due to chickenpox.
3. Before chickenpox vaccine was available, every year in the U.S. over 8,000 children were hospitalized and about one child died every week from chickenpox or its complications.
4. Complications of chickenpox increase as a person gets older.
5. Chickenpox generally causes a rash (300-500 blisters), itching, fever, and tiredness. It can also cause pneumonia, brain damage, or death.
6. If a child gets chickenpox, he or she is usually out of school for a week or more.

Not sure your child has had all the other shots required for school?

Talk to your health care provider or visit the Minnesota Department of Health's Immunization Program Web site at www.health.state.mn.us/immunize.

For more information

For more information about Minnesota's School Immunization Law, call the Minnesota Department of Health Immunization Program or visit www.health.state.mn.us/immunize (click on Immunization Laws in the left-hand column).



Immunization Program
 P.O. Box 64975
 St. Paul, MN 55164-0975
 651-201-5503 or 1-800-657-3970
www.health.state.mn.us/immunize