

# Chickenpox immunization requirement begins September 2004

Is your child going into kindergarten or 7<sup>th</sup> grade?

Beginning in September 2004, children entering kindergarten and 7<sup>th</sup> grade will need to:

- Show proof they have either received a chickenpox (varicella) shot or have had the disease, **OR**
- Show proof of a medical exemption signed by their health care provider, **OR**
- File a notarized waiver with your school if you are conscientiously opposed to chickenpox vaccine

How many shots will your child need?

The chickenpox vaccine protects children from severe chickenpox and its complications. Depending on your child's age, he or she will need either one or two shots to be protected.

- Children under 13 years of age need one chickenpox shot.
- Children 13 years of age and older need two chickenpox shots.

Not sure if your child has had chickenpox?

Getting the shot is not harmful if your child has had chickenpox disease. Talk to your child's doctor.

Six good reasons to vaccinate your child against chickenpox

- The chickenpox virus spreads easily from person to person, through the air or by contact with fluid from chickenpox blisters.
- 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.
- 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.
- Complications of chickenpox increase as a person gets older.
- Chickenpox generally causes a rash (300-500 blisters), itching, fever, and tiredness. It can also cause pneumonia, brain damage, or death.
- 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 web site (the address is at the bottom of this page).

For more information

For more information about Minnesota's School Immunization Law, call or visit the Web site of the Minnesota Department of Health Immunization Program (the address is at the bottom of this page), or send an e-mail to [immunizerule@health.state.mn.us](mailto:immunizerule@health.state.mn.us).



Immunization Program  
P.O. Box 64975  
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651-201-5503, 800-657-3970  
[www.health.state.mn.us/immunize](http://www.health.state.mn.us/immunize)

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