

Vax Facts

E-NEWS FROM THE NORTH CAROLINA IMMUNIZATION BRANCH

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Welcome!

Thanks for subscribing to Vax Facts, the North Carolina Immunization Branch's e-newsletter. We hope this will help us stay connected to immunization providers across North Carolina. Feel free to share this document with whomever you choose and encourage your colleagues to subscribe. Sign up instructions are at the end of this e-newsletter.

What's Going On In the Immunization Branch?

Expansion of Tetanus, Diphtheria and Acellular Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine

Because of increased incidence of pertussis disease (whooping cough) across the state, the North Carolina Immunization Program (NCIP) is making Tdap vaccine universally available immediately and until further notice. All providers may administer NCIP-provided Tdap to anyone seven years and older (including adults), regardless of insurance status, for whom Tdap is indicated, with a specific emphasis on:

- Cocooning infants, which is defined as the strategy of vaccinating women who may become pregnant, pregnant women, and all close contacts of infants aged < 12 months such as parents, siblings, grandparents, household contacts and child-care providers, with one dose of Tdap.
- Healthcare personnel (HCP), who are defined as paid and unpaid persons working in health-care settings who have the potential for exposure to patients and/or to infectious materials.
- Anyone with a pre-existing, chronic, respiratory disease and their close contacts.
- Any child 18 and under with incomplete protection from pertussis.

For additional details, refer to the [memo](#) dated March 15, 2012.

The NCIP Coverage Criteria was recently updated to include the expansion of Tdap vaccine. Access the [Coverage Criteria section](#) of our website to download the document. Review the entire page to find a list of recent changes to the coverage criteria - complete with the dates those changes were made and links to corresponding memos with more detailed information.

Back to School

April is a significant month as it pertains to vaccines and children. This month marks the beginning of kindergarten pre-registration for many North Carolina schools.

Information about the immunization requirements for all levels of school entry including kindergarten, sixth-grade and college can be found on the Immunization Branch website at

<http://immunize.nc.gov/schools/schools.htm>

In addition, the Immunization Branch has developed free materials including flyers, postcards and posters that schools can order and use to educate parents and staff about immunization requirements. Schools may order these materials from the Immunization Branch free of charge. These materials can be found at

<http://immunize.nc.gov/schools/resourcesforschools.htm>.

Immunization. Power to Protect

[National Infant Immunization Week](#) will be held from April 21-28. NIIW is an annual observance to promote the benefits of immunizations and to improve the health of children two years old and younger. Celebrate the week by planning activities that will educate and encourage parents in your community to vaccinate their infants against preventable diseases including measles, mumps and pertussis.

The Immunization Branch has a variety of materials to help you educate your parents about vaccines. Log on to our website at www.immunize.nc.gov to view, download and order free educational materials.

Adolescent Immunization Awareness Month

Vaccines aren't just for infants! April is Adolescent Immunization Awareness Month in North Carolina. This is the perfect opportunity to remind parents to protect their teens and pre-teens by bringing them up to date on required and recommended vaccinations.

Last year, the Advisory Council on Immunization Practices (ACIP) updated its meningococcal vaccination recommendations to include routine meningococcal vaccination for all 11-18 year olds. If vaccinated at age 11-12, a booster at age 16 is recommended. If vaccinated at age 13-15, a booster is recommended at age 16-18.

Determining Eligibility for VFC Vaccines Flow Chart

The IB has made determining eligibility for VFC vaccines a little easier with a new [flow chart](#). The chart is also available on the [IB website](#).

Information Right at Your Fingertips!

Did you know that the Immunization Branch website, www.immunize.nc.gov, contains a wealth of information? You can find details about the basics of vaccine preventable diseases and vaccines, and NCIR training resources on our site, as well as order free materials for your practice or patients. Be sure to review our website frequently, so that you can take full advantage of what it has to offer, as well as to stay up-to-date on what's going on in world of vaccines.

Clinician's Corner

With the recent outbreak of pertussis in North Carolina, please take a moment to review the following information about this vaccine-preventable disease.

Pertussis is an acute bacterial infection of the respiratory tract that is caused by *Bordetella pertussis* that is transmitted from an infected person to susceptible persons, primarily through aerosolized droplets of respiratory secretions or by direct contact with respiratory secretions from the infected person.

Clinical Case Definition for Pertussis

- A cough illness lasting at least two weeks with one of the following: paroxysms of coughing, inspiratory "whoop" or posttussive vomiting, and without other apparent cause (as reported by a health-care professional)

Laboratory Criteria for Diagnosis

- Isolation of *Bordetella pertussis* from a clinical specimen, or positive polymerase chain reaction (PCR) assay for *B. pertussis*

Case Classification

Confirmed

- An acute cough illness of any duration that is laboratory confirmed by culture or one that meets the clinical case definition and is either laboratory confirmed by PCR or epidemiologically linked to a laboratory confirmed case by either culture or PCR.
- PCR-positive cases with <14 days duration of cough should not be reported as confirmed.

Probable

- A case that meets the clinical case definition and is not laboratory confirmed by culture or PCR, and is not epidemiologically linked directly to a laboratory-confirmed case.

Tdap Vaccination Recommendations

Ages 7 through 18 years

- For routine use in adolescents aged 11 through 18 years who have completed the recommended childhood DTP/DTaP vaccination series preferably at the age of 11 to 12 year-old preventative health-care visit.
- Children and adolescents who did not get a complete series of DTP/DTaP shots by age 7 should complete the series using a combination of Tdap and Td.

Age 19 years and Older

- All adults should get a booster dose of Td every 10 years. Adults should get a dose of Tdap as their next booster dose. Adults 65 years and older may get one booster dose of Tdap.
- Adults (including women who may become pregnant and pregnant women) and adults who expect to have close contact with a baby younger than 12 months of age should get a dose of Tdap to help protect the baby from pertussis.
- Health care personnel, regardless of age, should receive a single dose of Tdap as soon as feasible if they have not previously received Tdap.
- The minimal interval was removed, and Tdap can now be administered regardless of interval since the last tetanus or diphtheria-containing vaccine.

NCIR Training

Online NCIR Classes

Join us for free online NCIR training sessions on the second Wednesday of each month at 9 a.m. with a repeat session at 1 p.m. There is no need to pre-register. Simply log on to the NCIR and look under the Announcements section for a link to join the sessions. You'll also need to dial in via telephone to hear the presentation, just remember to mute your phone! Each session is approximately 30 minutes.

Upcoming online training sessions:

Date	Time	Title	Additional Information
April 11	9 a.m. and 1 p.m.	Efficient Ordering Procedures	Learn about common, avoidable oversights in the vaccine ordering process, as well as most common reasons for delays in vaccine order shipments.

New for 2012

Once a quarter, the Immunization Branch staff will offer an online NCIR training session for providers and staff that are new to the NCIR.

Date	Time
June 13	9 a.m. and 1 p.m.

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Step Two: Respond to the system-generated confirmation email. Read this email carefully and follow the included instructions to complete the sign-up process. Please note, you must respond to this system-generated confirmation email within three days. The easiest way to complete the sign-up process is by simply replying to the confirmation email.

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Contact Information

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Help Desk • Phone: 877-873-6247 • Fax: 800-544-3058 • Email: ncirhelp@dhhs.nc.gov

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