

Oregon School and Childcare Immunization Requirements: Frequently Asked Questions for Parents

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Do all schools and childcare programs require shots?

Shots are required for attendance at all elementary, middle and high schools in Oregon, whether public, private, charter or alternative schools. Shots are also required for attendance at all preschools, Head Start programs, and certified childcare facilities. If your child attends a registered family childcare, your daycare provider should ask you to provide dates that your child received shots. Nearly every place that provides care for a child outside the home requires parents to provide immunization information.

What shots are required for school and childcare attendance in Oregon?

Oregon requires immunization against eleven vaccine-preventable diseases:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Polio
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Hepatitis A
- Hib (*Haemophilus influenzae* type B) – only for children under 5 years of age

What other shots are recommended?

There are additional vaccines that children are not required to have to stay in school or childcare, however experts agree that children should have them for optimal protection. These immunizations may be added to the school/facility requirements in the future. These vaccines include:

- Pneumococcal
- Influenza
- Rotavirus
- Meningococcal
- HPV (human papillomavirus)

Recommended ages and schedules vary by vaccine. Please see your health care provider for additional information.

Why are shots required?

Shots provide protection against contracting serious diseases to the person who receives them. Shots also help protect our friends, neighbors and communities by reducing the number of people vulnerable to these diseases. When enough people are vaccinated, these diseases tend to stop circulating. Outbreaks of disease occur more frequently in schools and programs that serve young children. Vaccine requirements help protect children from disease.

How do I prove that my child has had shots?

Make sure that you take your child's immunization record with you when you enroll your child in school or childcare. You will be given a Certificate of Immunization Status form to complete with the dates of your child's shots. Parents or guardians can sign the Certificate of Immunization Status; there is no need to have it signed by your child's doctor or medical provider. Students 15 years of age or older can sign their own Certificate of Immunization Status forms.

Where can I get a Certificate of Immunization Status?

Your child's school or childcare provider will have copies of the correct form. You can also pick up a copy at your local county health department. The form is available online at:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/PreventionWellness/VaccinesImmunization/GettingImmunized/Documents/SchCISform.pdf>

with instructions in English at:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/PreventionWellness/VaccinesImmunization/GettingImmunized/Documents/SchCISInsEng.pdf>

and instructions in Spanish at:

<http://public.health.oregon.gov/PreventionWellness/VaccinesImmunization/GettingImmunized/Documents//SchCISInsSp.pdf>

Why is Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine required?

Varicella, also known as chickenpox, is a disease that is passed easily from person-to-person through the air. It causes an itchy rash, usually all over the body, and can lead to common complications like scarring, bacterial infections and pneumonia, and also to less common complications like inflammation of the brain. About 3 of every 1,000 people who contract varicella end up hospitalized, and a few die. Severe disease can be prevented with vaccination. Breakthrough disease can occur after vaccination, but it is usually exceptionally mild, with few sores and no fever.

What if a child has had Varicella (chickenpox) disease?

If a child has had varicella disease, a parent may check "yes" in the history of disease box in the varicella section of the Certificate of Immunization Status. An estimated month and year is also helpful, but is not required.

Where can I take my child for shots?

Most pediatric and family practice clinics offer shots. If your child has a regular medical provider, call their office for an appointment to get shots. If your child doesn't have a regular provider, contact your local county health department, or call 1-800-SAFENET (1-800-723-3638). They will be able to help find a clinic where your child can get shots.

Does Oregon allow exemptions?

Yes, Oregon allows several kinds of exemptions. A religious exemption may be signed by a parent or guardian. A medical exemption must be signed by a physician or the county health department. An immunity exemption is signed by a physician to show history of disease or lab results demonstrating immunity.