



North Carolina Department of Health and Human Services
Division of Public Health – Women’s & Children’s Health Section

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Beverly Eaves Perdue, Governor

Lanier M. Cansler, Secretary

August 30, 2010

MEMORANDUM

TO: NCIP Providers

FROM: Beth Rowe-West, RN, BSN, Head,
Immunization Branch

SUBJECT: Tdap Vaccine Requirement for Adolescents

The purpose of this memo is to remind you of the requirement for students entering 6th grade in public schools, and those 12 years of age in non-public schools, to receive a dose of Tdap vaccine, if it has been at least 5 years since their last dose of tetanus-containing vaccine.

This requirement became effective for the 2008-09 school year, and its implementation presented many challenges for healthcare providers and schools. In an effort to address the issues that have arisen with this requirement, the Immunization Branch has developed a question and answer document for healthcare providers and school nurses. **You are strongly encouraged to review this document carefully, and retain it for future reference.**

Printed educational materials related to the Tdap requirement are available and may now be ordered from the Immunization Branch by completing the enclosed order form. Please note: in light of the recent program changes, these materials can only be used/given to parents during the current transition period, while state funds are still available to provide required vaccines to insured children entering school this year (in kindergarten through eighth grade). Once the transition period ends, these materials are no longer accurate and must be discarded. The transition period ends when your state-funded vaccine supply is depleted.

Providers and schools should be actively working to ensure that students who are required to receive Tdap for school entry for 2010-11 are vaccinated as early as possible.

Questions about the Tdap requirement should be directed to the Regional Immunization Nurse assigned to your area or to the central office of the Immunization Branch at 919.707.5550.

CC:	SMT Regional Immunization Staff WCH Nursing Consultants Jessica Gerdes	CO Staff Local Health Directors Joy Reed	Ron Helder Steve Shore Peter Graber	Rebecca Reeve Sherry Lehman Gerri Mattson
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Q&A for School Nurses and Providers on Tdap Requirement

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A booster dose of tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis vaccine is required for individuals attending public school who are entering the sixth grade on or after August 1, 2008, if five years or more have passed since the last dose of tetanus/diphtheria toxoid.

A booster dose of tetanus/diphtheria/pertussis vaccine is required for individuals not attending public schools who are 12 years of age on or after August 1, 2008, if five years or more have passed since the last dose of tetanus/diphtheria toxoid.

However, pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine is not required for individuals between 7 years of age through the fifth grade for those attending public schools and 7 through 12 years of age for those not attending public schools.

When administering Tdap to students, please remind the parent that they MUST provide written documentation of the immunization to the school, and keep a copy of the written documentation for their records.

Why are the Tdap requirements different for public school students vs. non-public school students?

Some non-public schools do not use a grade level system, so it was necessary to designate an age rather than a grade level for students not in public school to receive Tdap. Therefore, for students not in public school, Tdap is required at age 12.

Are rising 6th graders in public school who are 10 years old required to receive Tdap?

Yes. Rising 6th graders who are 10 years old are NOT exempt from the Tdap requirement. There is an FDA approved Tdap vaccine for 10 year olds. Therefore, if it has been at least 5 years since the child's last tetanus-containing vaccine, rising 6th graders must be immunized. Providers are encouraged to stock both Tdap vaccines to assure rising 6th graders are vaccinated appropriately.

Are rising 6th graders in public school who are 9 years old required to receive Tdap?

No. A child entering sixth grade at age 9 would NOT be required to receive Tdap because there is no FDA approved Tdap vaccine for 9 year olds. A medical exemption is NOT required in this situation, and the school is not required to track the child.

If a public school student has not received Tdap within 30 days after enrollment in the 6th grade and they are eligible to receive it, can I accept an appointment card from a health care provider and consider them "in process"?

No. Tdap is a one-time vaccination that is readily available at any local health department. A student should not have to delay vaccination in order to have a doctor's exam or visit. In addition, providers who receive state supplied vaccine have agreed not to place conditions on receiving immunizations, such as requiring a physical exam before vaccination. If parents prefer their child have a doctor visit prior to vaccination with Tdap they should plan accordingly, and schedule this well in advance of the school deadline.

If a student was medically exempt at an earlier age from DTaP due to the pertussis component, should the student receive Tdap?

Most of the reactions that small children experience after DTaP such as prolonged crying and high fevers are not contraindications to Tdap. The ACIP states that only the following are valid contraindications and precautions to Tdap vaccine:

Contraindications

- Serious allergic reaction (i.e., anaphylaxis) to any component of the vaccine.
- History of encephalopathy (e.g., coma or prolonged seizures) not attributable to an identifiable cause within 7 days of administration of a vaccine with pertussis components.

Precautions

- Guillain-Barré syndrome <6 weeks after a previous dose of a tetanus toxoid-containing vaccine.
- Progressive neurologic disorder, including progressive encephalopathy, or uncontrolled epilepsy, until the condition has stabilized.

Temporary Deferral

- Moderate or severe acute illness with or without fever. Defer Tdap or Td vaccination until the acute illness resolves.
- History of an Arthus reaction following a previous dose of a tetanus toxoid-containing and/or diphtheria toxoid-containing vaccine, including MCV4 (see Safety Considerations for Adolescent Vaccination with Tdap or Td section for a description of an Arthus reaction).

Refer to ACIP statement on Tdap use in Adolescents for full information. This statement can be found on-line at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr5503.pdf

I have a public school student who is repeating the sixth grade. Are they subject to the Tdap requirement?

Yes -- the requirement applies to all students entering 6th grade, whether it be for the first time or the second time, or the fourth time.

I have a student whose parent refuses to allow them to have Tdap vaccine. What do I do?

Tdap for eligible sixth graders in public school and 12 year olds in non public school is a requirement of state law, just like the vaccines required for kindergarten entry. Unless the child has a properly documented medical or religious exemption, they may not attend school 30 days after enrollment in 6th grade for public school students or after the 13 birthday for students not in public school, if a parent refuses to vaccinate by that time. Philosophical exemptions from immunizations are prohibited by North Carolina law.

If a 10 year old accidentally is given Adacel (which is not FDA approved for 10 year olds) instead of Boostrix do they need to have the dose repeated?

No, per CDC recommendations, it is not necessary to repeat the dose in this situation.

Does Tdap contain Thimerosal?

Neither brand of Tdap vaccine contains thimerosal.

If it is close to the thirty-day deadline and we still have a lot of students who haven't received Tdap, can we extend the deadline more than thirty days past school entry?



No. The Tdap requirement and the requirement for all children attending school to be vaccinated within 30 days of the first day of attendance are state law. Therefore, neither school systems nor local health departments have the authority to suspend or change the law.

How do the recent program changes affect this requirement?



Recent changes to the North Carolina Immunization Program (NCIP) mean that free, state-funded vaccines are no longer provided to insured children. Insured families may be able to take advantage of \$3 million in one-time funding approved by the N.C. General Assembly to provide a limited amount of free vaccine during the transition away from the state-funded program. The vaccine will be available for children entering kindergarten through 8th grade while supplies last. Not all providers will receive vaccines purchased with this one-time funding. All providers were notified earlier this month if they were to receive vaccines purchased with these funds. If your practice was notified that you would not be a recipient of these vaccines, you may wish to refer insured patients who have out of pocket vaccine costs to the local health department. In some cases, the cost may be less there. Once the supply of free vaccine is depleted, patients with insurance will need to use their insurance plan to receive vaccine services. In some cases, this may require a co-pay or deductible.


Vaccine Requirements – Materials Order Form
(Effective 2008-09 school year and beyond)
Resources for Providers
Materials are FREE to order!
Please FAX your order to 1-800-544-3058

Provider Education Materials

Item	Picture	Description	Quantity in English	Quantity in Spanish
 Tdap Requirement Flyer		Contains details about the Tdap requirement, available to providers as an educational resource. (8.5x11)		N/A
 Pocket Guide for Clinicians		Quick reference guide for providers re: school immunization requirements at kindergarten, sixth grade and college entry. (3.5x9)		N/A

Patient Education Materials – for Kindergarten & 6th Grade Requirements

 Is Your Child Ready Postcard – for Kindergarten Entry		Reminder/Recall postcard for parents of rising kindergarten students with information about the immunization requirements. (8.5x5.5)		
 Is Your Child Ready Postcard – for 6th Grade Entry		Reminder/Recall postcard for parents of rising 6 th grade students with information about the immunization requirements. (8.5x5.5)		

 <p>Parent Education Flyer for 6th Grade Vaccine Requirements</p>		<p>FAQs for parents of rising 6th grade students, contains information about the rule change, vaccine and disease. (8.5x11)</p>		
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Please complete the contact information below. Send your request to the N.C. Immunization Branch by fax to 1-800-544-3058. Please allow at least two weeks for delivery. All of the materials are also available on the Internet, and can be downloaded at no cost at www.immunizenc.org.

Contact Name:	
Organization:	
Address (No PO Box):	
City/State:	
Zip:	
Telephone:	