

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 preschool attendance and for attendance at all Head Start programs and at all certified childcare facilities. If your child attends a family childcare program, 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.

Which shots does Oregon require?

Oregon requires vaccination against nine vaccine-preventable diseases, including:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus
- Polio
- Varicella (Chickenpox)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Hepatitis B
- Hib (Haemophilus Influenzae type B) – only for children under 5 years of age

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 vaccines may be added to the school/facility requirements in the future. These vaccines include:

- Pertussis (Whooping Cough)
- Hepatitis A
- Pneumococcal
- Influenza

Recommended ages and schedules vary by vaccine. Please see your medical professional for additional information.

Why are shots required?

Shots provide protection against contracting serious diseases to the person who receives them. Shots also provide protection to 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 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 medical provider.

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.

Why is Varicella (chickenpox) vaccine required?

Varicella disease 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, a few die. Severe disease can be prevented with vaccination and while breakthrough disease does occur after vaccination, it is usually exceptionally mild, with few sores and no fever.

What if a child has had Varicella (chickenpox)?

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. They will be able to help you get shots for your child.

Does Oregon allow exemptions?

Yes, Oregon allows two kinds of exemptions: religious, signed by a parent or guardian; and medical, signed by a physician or the county health department.