

New School Immunization Requirements Effective Aug. 1

Changes to school immunization requirements for five vaccines take effect Aug. 1 according to Texas Department of State Health Services officials.

“The changes were made to update the Texas elementary and secondary school immunization requirements to more closely match recommendations by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices,” said Jack Sims, DSHS immunization branch manager.

Changes affect mainly students entering kindergarten and seventh grade. All immunizations must be completed by the first day of attendance at public and private schools. The vaccines and new requirements are:

- **Hepatitis A vaccine:** Students entering kindergarten statewide must have had two doses of the hepatitis A vaccine.
- **Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine:** Students entering kindergarten must have had two doses of the MMR vaccine. Students in grades 1 through 12 must continue to meet the current requirement, which is two doses of a measles-containing vaccine and one dose each of mumps and rubella vaccine.
- **Varicella vaccine:** Students entering kindergarten and seventh grade must have had two doses. Students in grades 1 through 6 and 8 through 12 must continue to meet the current requirement, which is one dose of varicella vaccine.
- **Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis-containing vaccine (Tdap):** Students entering seventh grade must have had one dose of Tdap vaccine. Students in seventh grade must have had a booster dose of Tdap, but only if it has been five years since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine. Students in grades 8 through 12 must have had a booster dose of Tdap if it has been 10 years since their last dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine.
- **Menigococcal vaccine:** Students entering seventh grade must have had one dose.

“A student may be enrolled provisionally if the student has received at least one dose of each required vaccine,” Sims said. “To remain enrolled, the student must complete the required doses in each vaccine series on schedule and as quickly as is medically feasible.”

Information about the new Texas immunization requirements was sent to health care providers, schools and child-care facilities earlier this year.

The full list of immunization requirements effective Aug. 1 for the 2009-2010 school year is available at www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/docs/school/6-14eng.pdf.

Immunizations also are required for children in pre-kindergarten and child-care facilities. Those requirements are available at www.dshs.state.tx.us/immunize/docs/school/childcare_reqsENG.pdf.

For information about clinic locations, please call the Vernon DSHS office at 940-552-8770