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Administrator



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Release Date: December 20, 2007
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State Health Officer

NEVADA STATE HEALTH DIVISION NEWS RELEASE

New Vaccine Requirements for Child Care, School Age and College Students

Nevada State Board of Health passes additional vaccination requirements

Carson City—On October 19, 2007, the Nevada State Board of Health passed additional vaccination requirements that effect children in child care facilities, public schools, private schools and universities.

Effective immediately, all children enrolled in a licensed child care facility in Nevada must be vaccinated against Hepatitis A, Hepatitis B, Varicella (Chickenpox) and Streptococcus pneumoniae (Pneumococcus) unless excused because of medical or religious reasons. These vaccination requirements will decrease the potential for spread of disease within child care facilities and aid in improving Nevada's childhood immunization rates overall. "Vaccination against these diseases is a standard of medical practice and no child should go through life without the protection of these vaccines," stated Alex Haartz, Administrator of the Nevada State Health Division.

Beginning June 30, 2008, children entering the 7th grade of both public and private schools must be vaccinated against Bordetella pertussis (Whooping cough) unless excused because of medical or religious reasons. One dose of a pertussis-containing vaccine must be given after age 10. Whooping cough immunity has been shown to wane from early childhood vaccination and pertussis disease continues to rise among adolescents and young adults. In 2007, there were a total of 37 cases of pertussis, statewide, reported to the Nevada State Health Division. Pertussis vaccination along with other pre-teen vaccinations against meningitis and human papillomavirus follow recommendations by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians and provide protection against these devastating diseases.

Beginning September 1, 2008, unless excused because of medical or religious reasons, any freshman college student under the age of 24 may not live in on-campus housing unless vaccinated against Neisseria meningitidis (Meningococcus). Freshmen who live in dormitory-style housing are four times more likely to contract meningitis caused by Neisseria meningitidis than the general population. This vaccination requirement will help prevent this debilitating and sometimes fatal disease.

(MORE)



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Vaccinations against these diseases are available from most pediatricians and family practice physicians throughout the state. Public health departments and state community health nurses also have these and other childhood and adolescent vaccines on hand for parents to fulfill these requirements.

Children under 19 years of age, who are enrolled in Medicaid, are American Indian/Alaska Native, are uninsured or have insurance without a vaccine benefit may receive these vaccines free of charge at many clinics across the state. Children enrolled in Nevada Check Up, the state's S-CHIP program, may also receive these vaccines at no cost to the parent.

Passage of these state regulations brings Nevada in-line with national health standards and standards of medical practice. Most importantly, these regulations will help to raise immunization rates, keep children healthy, in school learning and prevent costly and devastating disease.

With the exception of pertussis, these diseases are at record low levels through the widespread use of vaccines. Parents and doctors must remain vigilant and provide vaccinations to our babies, children, and teenagers and keep these diseases from returning to epidemic levels.

For more information about immunizations, please contact Doug Banghart, Immunization Program Manager: 775-684-5902.

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