

NEW RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CHILDHOOD VACCINATIONS

In the summer of 2006, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommended a second dose of varicella (chickenpox) vaccine be given to children four to six years old to further improve protection against the disease. The ACIP further recommends that all children, adolescents and adults who previously received only one dose of varicella should receive a second dose.

In the summer of 2005, new vaccines were licensed that offered protection against pertussis (whooping cough) for persons aged 10 – 64 years of age. Prior to that there was no vaccine available for persons 7 years and older, and they were left susceptible to this highly contagious respiratory tract infection. The vaccine, referred to as Tdap also protects against tetanus and diphtheria, and the recommended dose is a single injection, usually given between ages 11-12. All persons aged 10-64 should receive a single dose of Tdap, and can be given within 2 years of a previous vaccination with a vaccine containing tetanus.

It is still recommended that adolescents get a single dose of vaccine to protect against meningococcal disease.

Also available is the new HPV vaccine for females, ages 9-26 years of age that protects against human papillomaviruses that causes 70% of cervical cancers.

Children that have no insurance coverage for vaccines may be eligible for immunizations through the Iowa Vaccines for Children Program, and need to contact their medical providers or Wright County Public Health @ 515-532-3461 for more information.

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