



Oklahoma State
Department of Health

Oklahoma Immunization Update April 2008

DISEASE and PREVENTION SERVICES
IMMUNIZATION SERVICE

PLEASE POST & DISTRIBUTE TO ALL NURSING AND MEDICAL STAFF

New Multi-Vaccine Vaccine Information Statement

A new multi-vaccine Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) that can be used for all the routine 2, 4, and 6-month vaccines is now available in English. Other languages are not yet available. This VIS may be used in place of individual VISs whenever any or all of the routine birth through 6-month vaccines (DTaP, IPV, Hib, Hepatitis B, PCV, and Rotavirus) are administered at the same visit, including the combination vaccines, Pediarix® and Comvax®, containing these components. When using this VIS, check the boxes on the first page indicating which vaccines are being administered. Use of the multi-dose VIS is optional. The individual VISs for these vaccines may still be used. Note that this VIS is four pages (front and back) instead of the usual two. This VIS may be found at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web site at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/downloads/vis-multi.pdf>.

Combined Vaccines Not Currently Available through VFC Program

Due to the recall in December, 2007 of certain lots of Merck Hib conjugate vaccines and the suspension of production of Merck Hib vaccines, combined Hib/Hepatitis B vaccine (Comvax®) is not available through the Oklahoma Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program at this time. Also, TriHIBit®, combined DTaP/Hib vaccine, produced by Sanofi Pasteur is not available. Sanofi has diverted production of Hib vaccine used in TriHIBit to production of single antigen ActHIB® vaccine. You will be notified when these vaccines are available for ordering.

Questions about Vaccines and Autism

You may be aware of the recent settlement of a federal vaccine injury case that found that vaccination may have contributed to the

worsening of a pre-existing genetic disorder in a Georgia girl that led to autism-like symptoms. The case puts a spotlight on the continuing public debate over whether vaccines have played some role in the increasing number of children with autism in the U.S. – particularly concerns about the preservative thimerosal.

As this case may prompt concern among some parents and lead to vaccination refusals, the following talking points and resources are offered for responding to parents' questions:

- First, the settlement did not rule on any possible relationship between autism and thimerosal. It ruled that the five shots the girl received in July 2000, when she was 19 months old, "might exacerbate an existing encephalopathy in someone with a mitochondrial defect."
- This is a legal settlement, not a scientific finding. Sixteen large, population-based studies do not support a relationship between vaccines and autism.
- Except for some flu shots, vaccines given to children no longer contain thimerosal as a preservative.
- Although this family suffered a personal tragedy, it is important to avoid the potential tragedy of parents who misunderstand this legal finding and don't vaccinate children, leaving them at risk for vaccine-preventable diseases. The risk of severe illness, complications, and death from vaccine-preventable diseases is very real.

Resource:

"Thimerosal Questions and Answers" National Foundation for Infectious Diseases
<http://www.nfid.org/pdf/factsheets/thimerosal.pdf>

Immunization Service Contact Information

Telephone: 405.271.4073

Fax: 405.271.6133

E-mail: Immunize@health.ok.gov Web Site: <http://imm.health.ok.gov>

If you have any questions about this material please contact the

Oklahoma State Department of Health, Disease and Prevention Services, Immunization Service