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Newly Available Vaccines for Adolescent Immunization

Background

Although immunization programs in the United States which focus on infants and children have greatly decreased the occurrence of many childhood infections, vaccine-preventable diseases such as hepatitis B, measles, and rubella continue to affect adolescents and young adults.

Generally, vaccination programs have not focused on improving vaccination coverage among adolescents. However, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the American Medical Association (AMA), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) all strongly support the establishment of an adolescent immunization visit at 11 - 12 years of age. This visit will enable parents and practitioners to provide protection to adolescents from vaccine-preventable diseases.¹

Flexibility in administering vaccines is needed when working with adolescents. In many cases multiple dose vaccines may be indicated, and providers may need to determine which vaccines to administer during the initial visit and which to schedule for a return visit.

**General Vaccine Recommendations for
Alaska's Adolescent Immunization Program***

<i>Vaccine</i>	<i>Recommended age</i>	<i>Total # of doses required</i>	<i>Routine interval between doses</i>	<i>Minimum interval between doses</i>
Hepatitis A	2-14 years	2	6-12 months	6 months
Hepatitis B	1st year of life <i>or</i> 12 years of age	3	dose 1 → dose 2 = 1 mo dose 2 → dose 3 = 5 mo	dose 1 → dose 2 = 1 mo dose 2 → dose 3 = 2 mo
MMR (2nd dose)	4-6 years 11-12 years	2	usually several years	1 month
Tetanus/diphtheria	11-12	lifetime boosters	10 years	5 years
Varicella**	12-18 months <i>or</i> 11-12 years	1	N/A	N/A

* Immunizations recommended above may be provided with vaccines available through the Alaska Immunization Program's Universal Vaccine Distribution Program.

** Currently, Varicella vaccine is not available through the Alaska Immunization Program. This recommendation is provided for informational purposes only.

Documentation of Prior Vaccinations

Immunization providers may encounter adolescents who do not have documentation of prior vaccines that have been received. Providers should attempt to assess the immunization status through documentation from the parent, previous providers, or school records.² If documentation cannot be provided, a new immunization series should be started.

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References:

1. CDC. *Update: Childhood Vaccine Preventable Diseases-United States*, 1994. MMWR: 1994;43:718-720.
2. CDC. *Immunization of Adolescents*, 1996. MMWR: 1996;45: RR-13.

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