



Department of Health and Social Services  
Theodore A Mala, MD, MPH, Commissioner

Division of Public Health  
Peter M. Nakamura, MD, MPH, Director

Section of Epidemiology  
John Middaugh, MD, Editor

3601 C Street, Suite 540, PO Box 240249, Anchorage, Alaska 99524-0249 (907) 269-8000  
24-Hour Emergency Number 1-800-478-0084

http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us

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## HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE b (Hib) CONJUGATE VACCINE NOW AVAILABLE FOR IMMUNIZATION OF ALASKAN INFANTS YOUNGER THAN 15 MONTHS OF AGE

On October 5, the Centers for Disease Control announced that the U.S. Food and Drug Administration had approved the Lederle-Praxis Haemophilus b conjugate vaccine (HibTITER™) for use in infants in a three-dose immunization series at 2, 4 and 6 months of age. The American Academy of Pediatrics subsequently issued new recommendations for the use of HibTITER™ in infants.

In Alaska and in other states, implementation of the new ACIP recommendations for use of HibTITER™ at earlier ages was temporarily delayed while the State sought funding for additional vaccine and waited for a new federal vaccine contract to be established. The Alaska Immunization Program has now successfully negotiated funding that will allow us to provide HibTITER™ in sufficient quantities to implement the new immunization schedule statewide.

Three Hib Polysaccharide-Protein Conjugate Vaccines (HbCVs) are currently licensed for use in the United States (Table 1).

**Table 1. Hib Conjugate Vaccines Licensed by the FDA:**

<u>Manufacturer</u>	<u>Abbreviation</u>	<u>Trade Mark</u>	<u>Carrier Protein</u>
Connaught Laboratories	PRP-D	ProHIBit™	Diphtheria Toxoid
Praxis Biologics, Inc. (Distributed by Lederle Laboratories)	HBOC	HibTITER™	CRM197 (A nontoxic mutant diphtheria toxin)
Merck Sharp & Dohme	PRP-OMP	PedVAXHIB™	OMP (an outer-membrane protein complex of <u>Neisseria</u> <u>Meningitidis</u> )

The State Immunization Program will supply both HibTITER™ and ProHIBit™ (the Connaught product) to Alaska Health Care Providers. ProHIBit™ is not approved for administration in children less than 15 months of age. HibTITER™ vaccine previously distributed to Alaskan Health Care Providers may now be used in the new infant immunization schedule; however, ProHIBit™ should be offered only as a booster dose at age 15 months (following a series of HibTITER□) or as a child's first dose at age 15 months or older.

HBCVs are administered intramuscularly and can be given at separate sites at the same time as DTP, MMR, polio and hepatitis B vaccines. All children under age 5 years should be vaccinated against Hib disease. The state of

Alaska recommends the following Hib immunization schedules, based on recommendations of the Immunization Practices Advisory Committee:

<u>Dose</u>	<u>Age in Months</u>	<u>Vaccine</u>
Primary Series (3 Doses)	2, 4, and 6	HibTITER™ ProHIBit™ or HibTITER™
Booster	15	

Age (mos.) at time of first dose	# of Doses in Primary Series (HibTITER™)	Interval Between Primary Series Doses	Booster Dose (HibTITER™ ProHIBit™)	Total # Doses HbCV
3-6	3	2 mos. (minimum 1 mo.)	1 dose at 15 months or after	4
7-11	2	2 mos. (minimum 1 mo.)	1 dose at 15 months or after	3
12-14	1	-	1 dose at 15 mos. or after (at least one month should separate this dose from the prior dose)	2
15-59	0	-	1 dose	1
>59			1 dose if child has a chronic illness known to be associated with an increased risk of Hib type b disease <sup>1</sup>	0-1

<sup>1</sup>Sickle-cell disease, asplenia, malignancies associated with immunosuppression.

Different primary immunization schedules are recommended for HibTITER™ and PedVAXHIB™ which was also recently approved for administration in infancy. To reduce potential confusion, the State Immunization Program will supply only HibTITER™ for the primary series. We also suggest that providers write the name of the manufacturer of the HbCV administered on the child's health record.