

A NOTE ON VACCINES FROM YOUR CHILD CARE PROVIDER, PEDIATRICIANS, AND THE UTAH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH:

We value the health and safety of your children. As a state-licensed child care program, we support and must adhere to state immunization requirements for all children enrolled in our program to ensure their health and safety. It is critical for children attending child care to receive all recommended vaccines to protect themselves and the other children in our program who are too young to be fully immunized.

Why immunizations are so important for children in child care settings

- Children younger than five are especially at risk for getting infections because their immune systems have not yet built up the defenses to fight infection. Immunizations help children build up these defenses.
- Many child care programs include children under one year old. These children are at the highest risk for getting vaccine-preventable infections because they are still receiving important immunizations. For example, children aren't fully protected against pertussis (whooping cough) until they are 6 months old. If infants under 6 months are exposed to someone with whooping cough, they are at high risk for becoming infected and having serious illness or even death.

Rules and recommendations

- Utah requires your child care provider to have written proof of each child's vaccines. A parent may get an exemption for their child to not be vaccinated. Your child care provider must also have written proof (a legally valid exemption form) for all exemptions.
- Disease outbreaks sometimes occur in child care. If there is even one case of a vaccine-preventable disease at your child's child care program, children for which the facility does not have written proof of the child's up to date status will be excluded from child care until they are vaccinated or risk of the disease has passed (sometimes up to 21 days).

Vaccine safety and effectiveness

- All vaccines undergo long and careful review.
- Vaccines do not cause autism. Many independent studies have convincingly shown that there is no link between autism and vaccines.
- No vaccine, or *any* medication or treatment, is completely risk free. Common side effects (tenderness and redness) are mild, but serious side effects (such as allergic reactions) are very rare.
- When parents choose not to vaccinate their child, they are trading the small risk of side effects from the vaccine for the risk of getting a vaccine-preventable disease. Vaccines keep disease away; when we stop giving them, diseases that can be prevented by vaccines return.

- While some diseases, like measles, are not common in Utah, they are only a plane ride away.

More information

- Free or low cost vaccines are available for those who qualify through the Utah Vaccines for Children (VFC) program (http://www.immunize-utah.org/VFC_program/parents).
- For more information on vaccines and the diseases they prevent, you can contact your health care provider or the Utah Immunization Program at 1-800-275-0659 or www.immunize-utah.org.

