

Why immunise?

It is important that children are fully vaccinated before they start childcare or kindergarten to:

- help protect them from diseases that can be prevented by vaccination
- help protect others who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons from being exposed to these diseases.

Immunisation is a proven and safe way to be protected against diseases that cause serious illness and sometimes death.

Childhood immunisation schedule

The National Immunisation Schedule program provides free vaccinations to children at birth, 2 months (from as early as six weeks), 4, 6, 12 and 18 months of age and 3½-4 years of age.



To find out what immunisations your child needs:

- see your doctor or contact your local council immunisation service
- search 'childhood immunisation' on www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au
- receive reminders when your child's immunisations are due; download the free VaxOnTime Victoria app, available for iOS and Android devices.

More information

Better Health Channel

www.betterhealth.vic.gov.au

Department of Health and Human Services website

www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation

Australian Government Department of Health & Ageing Immunise Australia Program

www.immunise.health.gov.au

For translated versions of this document search 'starting childcare or kindergarten' on www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au



Translating and interpreting service call 131 450

Early childhood services and immunisation providers can order free copies of this brochure online:

www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation/order-resources

To receive this publication in an accessible format phone 1300 882 008, using the National Relay Service 13 36 77 if required, or email immunisation@dhhs.vic.gov.au

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Starting childcare or kindergarten?

Immunisation information for parents enrolling a child



Enrolment requirements in Victoria

By law¹, to finalise enrolment for your child in long day care, kindergarten, family day care or occasional care you must provide the service with an Immunisation History Statement that shows your child is:

- up to date with vaccinations for their age **OR**
- up to date with a vaccine catch-up schedule **OR**
- has a medical condition preventing them from being fully vaccinated.

What is an Immunisation History Statement?

It is a statement from the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) that shows what vaccines your child has received and, if applicable, which vaccines are due in the future and when.

All vaccines recorded on the AIR will appear in your child's Immunisation History Statement. You don't need to do anything to get your child on the AIR. It is the job of the vaccine provider to tell the AIR when they give your child a vaccine and which vaccines they have given.

The vaccines are provided free under the National Immunisation Program Schedule.

What is this document used for?

To finalise enrolment. To accept an offered place at a service, you must provide the service with an Immunisation History Statement. This would usually be done within two months before your child is due to start at the service.

To keep children safe. If there is a disease outbreak at the service, the document is used to identify children at risk (for example, children too young to

be fully immunised against a disease) who may need to stay away from the service until it is safe for them to return.

What if I cannot get this document?

In some circumstances a 16 week 'grace period' can be applied, so your child can start at the service while you organise the document. The service can advise if this applies to you.

How do I get an Immunisation History Statement?

The quickest way to get your child's statement is by using your Medicare online account through myGov or Express Plus Medicare mobile app.

You can also visit your local Medicare service centre or request for your child's statement to be posted to you by calling the AIR enquiries line on 1800 653 809. It can take 14 days to get your statement in the post.

How do I tell if my child is 'up to date'?

Review your child's most recent AIR Immunisation History Statement. At the bottom of the statement there is a section titled 'Next due immunisation(s)'. If the date of the next due vaccination is in the future, then your child's immunisations are up to date for their age.

If your child has completed all their childhood vaccinations there will be no vaccines listed under the 'Next due immunisation(s)' heading.

What do I do when my child has vaccinations AFTER enrolling?

After each vaccination, you should provide an updated Immunisation History Statement to the service to include in their records.

Getting the right documentation

Scenario	Advice
Lost AIR Immunisation History Statement	Use your Medicare online account through myGov or Express Plus Medicare mobile app to access a copy or call the AIR and request a copy be posted to you.
Incorrect AIR Immunisation History Statement	If vaccines are missing from a statement, contact the doctor/nurse to check if the records were sent to the AIR. Once the updated information is received by the AIR, a corrected Immunisation History Statement can be re-issued to you on request.
Overdue for a vaccination	See a doctor/immunisation nurse. The doctor/nurse will provide the vaccine and inform the AIR. Once the updated information is received by the AIR, an updated Immunisation History Statement can be issued to you on request.
Overdue for multiple vaccinations	See a doctor/immunisation nurse. The doctor/nurse will develop a 'catch-up schedule' and provide details to the AIR. Once the information is received by the AIR, an Immunisation History Statement can be issued to you on request.
Medical reasons can't be fully vaccinated	See a doctor. The doctor will provide information to the AIR and, on request, the AIR will issue you with a Statement that says 'up to date' and notes which vaccines your child cannot receive for medical reasons.
Overseas vaccination	See a doctor/immunisation nurse. Overseas vaccination schedules may differ from the Australian schedule and need to be checked by a doctor/nurse who will transfer the information to the AIR. An Immunisation History Statement will then be issued to you by the AIR at your request.
Questions or concerns	Seek advice from a medical doctor or immunisation nurse.

¹ Under the *Public Health and Wellbeing Act 2008*, in effect from 1 January 2016