

Chicken Pox Vaccine Requirements are Changing Over the Next Two Years

The State Board of Health recently changed the two-dose varicella (or chickenpox) vaccine school requirement. This school year students in K-6th grade are required to have two doses of varicella vaccine.

- The change is next school year when all students in 7th-8th grade will be required to have two doses of varicella vaccine.
- Then, in the following school year, 2016-2017, all students in 9th-12th grade will be required to have two doses of varicella vaccine.

Here is the revised requirement, showing the school year and all the grades that will be required to have two doses of varicella vaccine:

School Year	Grades
2015-2016	K-8 th
2016-2017	K-12 th

Students in the affected grades will be required to do one of the following:

- Get two doses of varicella vaccine, OR
- Show proof of immunity by blood test, OR
- Get healthcare provider verification of history of chickenpox disease, OR
- Submit a Certificate of Exemption.

Since school year 2008-2009, starting with kindergarteners, two doses of varicella vaccine have been required. The requirement moved up a grade each school year, with completion scheduled by school year 2020-2021 for all students in K-12th grade.

The reason for the change is the State Board of Health wanted to speed up the requirement to completely align with the national Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations that came out in 2006 to recommend two doses of varicella vaccine for all children. Also, we want to make sure adolescents are fully protected against varicella disease since they will more likely experience severe effects and complications if infected later in life.

**Please provide your child's school with a copy of their immunization record
when the second Varicella vaccine is received**