

Tdap School Requirement: Information for Schools



What is the Requirement?

One dose of Tdap (*tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis*) vaccine will be required for all students entering the 7th grade beginning with the fall semester of the 2011-2012 school year. Proof of immunization must be submitted before a student is allowed to enter the seventh grade; no grace period is allowed.

Proof of immunization consists of:

- A record of Tdap vaccination which includes the name of the vaccine and the date of vaccine administration signed or stamped by a doctor, nurse, clinic or other health care provider, or a record from the Oklahoma State Immunization Information System (OSIIS).

Or

- A record of DTaP (*diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis*) vaccination at 7 years of age or older.

Both Tdap and DTaP provide protection against the same diseases. The major difference between the two vaccines is the age group for which they are licensed. DTaP is given to children younger than 7 years of age and Tdap is given to children, adolescents, and adults 7 years of age and older.

Students who have already received a dose of Td (tetanus and diphtheria vaccine) at age 7 years or older must still receive a dose of Tdap. There is no minimum amount of time one needs to wait between receiving Td and Tdap.

Implementation

The Tdap requirement will be implemented incrementally over a six year period. The requirement will expand from 7th grade the first year of implementation to 7th through 12th grade by the sixth year of implementation (2016-2017 school year). The following table illustrates implementation of the Tdap requirement.

School Year	Grades affected by Tdap Requirement
2011-2012	Grade 7
2012-2013	Grades 7 and 8
2013-2014	Grades 7, 8, and 9
2014-2015	Grades 7, 8, 9, and 10
2015-2016	Grades 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11
2016-2017	Grades 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, and 12

Exemptions

Oklahoma law allows for immunization exemptions if a student has a valid medical, religious or philosophic reason for not being vaccinated. A new exemption form for Tdap is not needed for students with existing DTaP exemptions on file.

All schools should maintain a small supply of exemption certificates (Oklahoma Department of Health Form 216-A) for parents who request an exemption to any or all vaccines. The latest version of the exemption certificate is dated 11/08. Requests for forms may be made to the Immunization Service by fax (405) 271-6133 or email: immunize@health.ok.gov.

Why we need a Tdap requirement:

Tdap is a vaccine used to boost immunity to pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, and diphtheria. A dose of Tdap is recommended for all adolescents at age 11-12 years because protection provided by the DTaP shots they received as children wears off after 5 to 10 years.

- Immunity to whooping cough wears off over time. Preteens, teenagers, and adults are at risk for whooping cough, tetanus, and diphtheria 5 to 10 years after their last DTaP shot.
- Whooping cough has been increasing in the United States especially among teens (10–19 years of age) and babies younger than 6 months of age. In 2010, several states reported an increase in whooping cough cases, including a statewide epidemic in California.

- California reported over 7,000 cases of whooping cough and 10 deaths in babies in 2010.
- Texas reported more than 2,000 cases.
- High immunization levels will help prevent an increase in the number of cases of whooping cough in Oklahoma.

Whooping cough, or pertussis, is an illness that causes coughing fits so intense and rapid that the air is gone from the lungs and patients have difficulty breathing. The lack of oxygen to the brain during coughing fits may lead to brain damage, especially in babies.

Although whooping cough is usually a mild disease in adolescents, it can be serious for people of any age. Whooping cough can place a significant burden on families, as a person with whooping cough may be asked to stay home from work or school while receiving at least 5 days of antibiotic treatment so they won't spread the disease to others. Most deaths occur in babies who are too young to be fully vaccinated.

Tdap Recommendations for Adults

One dose of Tdap is also recommended for adults, especially those having close contact with infants. Teachers and school personnel should consider getting this vaccine.

Sources of Additional Information:

Adolescent Vaccination.Org

<http://www.adolescentvaccination.org/>

http://www.adolescentvaccination.org/doc/fact_sheet.pdf

http://www.adolescentvaccination.org/doc/primary_vaccine_fact_sheet.pdf

Vaccines for Teens NBA and WNBA Cares: <http://www.vaccinesforteens.net/index.html>

Oklahoma State Department of Health, Acute Disease Service

Public Health Fact Sheet on Pertussis:

<http://www.ok.gov/health/documents/Pertussis%202010.pdf>

Public Health Fact Sheet on Tetanus

<http://www.ok.gov/health/documents/Tetanus.2006.pdf>

Public Health Fact Sheet on Diphtheria

http://www.ok.gov/health/Disease,_Prevention,_Preparedness/Acute_Disease_Service/Disease_Information/Diphtheria.html

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention web site:

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) Vaccination: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/pertussis/default.htm>