

Monthly Immunization Update

March 2026

Dear Schools and partners,

The purpose of this newsletter is to deliver quick and meaningful updates to support our schools and partners in a variety of vaccine settings, and maintain our connection with all of you. We welcome your questions and comments. Please feel free to share this newsletter with all of your colleagues. Thank you!

What You Need to Know About Routine Immunizations

The West Coast Health Alliance (WCHA) and CDPH recommend that parents continue to follow the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) immunization schedule for children and teens. Read the full [news release](#).



- **Recent CDC changes (As of 1/5/26):** A new CDC decision reduces recommended vaccines but did not follow standard safety review and could increase preventable diseases.
- **Why it matters:** Skipping vaccines can lead to more sickness, missed school, and even severe sickness leading to hospitalizations and death in some children.
- **AAP schedule is evidence-based:** It considers when vaccines work best, safety, disease risk in the U.S. and access to care.
- **Insurance coverage:** Vaccines recommended as of December 31, 2025, remain covered by public and private insurance.
- **Stay informed:** Parents should discuss vaccine decisions with their child's healthcare provider.
- **Our commitment:** CDPH, WCHA and AAP continue to support proven vaccine recommendations to protect children.

Inside this issue:

Answers to Parents' Top Immunization Questions

What You Need to Know About Routine Immunizations 1

As a parent, you want to protect your child — staying informed will help. Your vaccine questions are important and deserve reliable information. If you want to learn more, ask your doctor or check out the websites at the end.

Answers to Parents' Top Immunization Questions 1-2

1. Why do children today get so many immunizations?

Thirty-five years ago, vaccines protected young children from only seven diseases. Today, we can protect them from at least 15 dangerous diseases because of medical advances. Many vaccines also require more than one dose to give children the best protection possible.

Adolescent Immunization Action Week Approaching 2

2. How safe are vaccines?

The [American Academy of Pediatrics](#), the [National Academy of Medicine](#), and the [World Health Organization](#) agree that vaccines are safe, and much safer than getting sick with the diseases that vaccines protect against. Millions of children and adults are vaccinated every year—safely. Thousands of people take part in rigorous clinical trials to test and develop safe and effective vaccines before the vaccines are licensed by the [Food and Drug Administration \(FDA\)](#). After being licensed, the [Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System \(VAERS\)](#) helps track any health effects that may happen hours, days, weeks, or even months later. Anyone can report a possible side effect so that it can be studied. VAERS and other [monitoring programs](#) help ensure that vaccines are safe.

3. Are diseases of the “old days” still around?

Yes. [Pertussis \(whooping cough\)](#) is still common in the U.S. Other diseases, such as [measles](#) and [polio](#), are circulating in other parts of the world. It just takes one unimmunized traveler to bring an infectious disease home from another country. If immunization levels drop, the rare cases we have in the U.S. could very quickly multiply—putting our children in danger.

- [Measles](#). Measles remains common in many countries. Both children and adults can catch measles while traveling and spread it to others when they come home, often causing measles cases and outbreaks.
- [A pertussis report found that in 2024](#), over 2,700 people in California became ill with whooping cough and one baby died.
- Before chickenpox vaccine was developed, the disease put more than 10,000 Americans in the hospital and caused more than 100 deaths each year. Children who get chickenpox can get serious skin infections or pneumonia.

4. What about holistic medicine?

Holistic medicines may be helpful for some conditions, but only vaccines provide specific immunity to diseases. Only vaccines have been scientifically proven to protect against COVID-19, flu, whooping cough, measles, and other diseases. Holistic practitioners including the [Naturopathic Doctors for Immunization](#), and [Dr. Andrew Weil](#) from the Center for Integrative Medicine all support immunization. For more information, please click [here](#).

Adolescent Immunization Action Week (AIAW) 2026 Approaching

Adolescent Immunization Action Week (AIAW), April 6–10, 2026, is our chance to ensure our schools have a strong defense against contagious diseases. Vaccines are essential in keeping our students healthy and reducing the spread of illnesses in our classrooms. Encourage families to book their child's doctor appointment early to beat the back-to-school rush and ensure everyone is protected. Learn more about school vaccine requirements at [CDPH's Shots For School webpage](#). For more information click [here](#).

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We are on the web!

<https://vchca.org/immunization-program>

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