

## Information on Vaccine Preventable Disease Symptoms and Transmission

Disease	Symptom	How is it Transmitted
Whooping cough (Pertussis)	Coughing spasms affecting breathing. Serious and sometimes fatal disease in babies and young children. Cough can last up to 3 months.	Respiratory droplets from a cough or runny nose.
Tetanus	Causes rigid spasms of the jaw, neck and other muscles. Painful illness which is often fatal.	Not transmitted from person to person. Tetanus germs are present in soil and in the gut of humans and animals.
Diphtheria	Sore throat, fever and weakness. Damaged heart and nervous system. Diphtheria is fatal in up to 10% of cases.	Respiratory droplets or direct contact with secretions and/or sores.
Measles	Rash, high fever. Can cause otitis media, pneumonia and inflammation of the brain. May be fatal in some cases.	Respiratory droplets or contact with secretions.
Mumps	Fever, headache, swollen parotid glands over the jaw. Can cause inflammation of the brain and testes.	Respiratory droplets or contact with secretions.
Rubella	Rash, fever. Causes mild illness in the person with the disease. Causes serious foetal abnormalities if transmitted to a pregnant mother, especially in the first trimester.	Respiratory droplets or contact with secretions.
Chicken pox (Varicella)	Fever, rash forming into blisters and crusts. Usually mild illness, but there can be complications. Can cause serious foetal abnormalities if transmitted to a pregnant mother. The virus can return in later life as shingles.	Respiratory droplets or contact with secretions or sores.
Hepatitis A	Fever, malaise, abdominal discomfort, leading to jaundice. While most people recover fully, it can lead to death from overwhelming infection of the liver.	Transmitted via faeces-oral route with poor hygiene and through contaminated foods.
Influenza	Fever, runny nose, cough, headache, muscle aches and lethargy. Complications can occur, especially if pregnant or person has a chronic disease.	Respiratory droplets or contact with secretions. The influenza virus may stay on hard surfaces for 1-2 days.

## Why Immunisation is important for Early Childhood Educators and Staff



Queensland Government



## Immunisation Recommendations for Early Childhood Educators and Staff



The following immunisations are recommended for educators and staff (including students) who work with babies and young children at:  
Kindergarten, Day Care, Family Day Care, Preschool and Outside School Hours Care

### and Staff

#### Adult Pertussis,

#### Tetanus & Diphtheria (dTpa)

If you have not had a pertussis (whooping cough) booster within the last 10 years

#### Measles, Mumps & Rubella (MMR)

If you are not immune or have not received 2 doses of MMR vaccine previously

#### Varicella (Chicken pox)

If you are not immune or have not received 2 doses of varicella vaccine previously

#### Hepatitis A

If you are not immune or have not received 2 doses of hepatitis A vaccine previously

#### Influenza

Once a year in autumn  
Discuss with your Doctor

### What Can I do?



1. Obtain a record of your vaccination history.
2. Speak to your employer about their staff immunisation policy.
3. Ask your local Doctor or Medical Centre about updating your vaccinations. (There is a cost associated with most vaccines).

## Health Reasons for Educator and Staff Immunisation



### What is Immunisation?

Immunisation works by activating the immune system to make antibodies to protect against certain diseases.

### Immunisation of Educators and Staff in Education and Care Services

Immunisation of all staff working in education and care services not only helps to protect the young children you care for, but helps to protect yourself and your family from disease. Exposure to disease at work can mean illness, and the risks of taking the disease home and time off work.

### Do Vaccines have Side Effects?

Like all medications, vaccines may have side effects. Nearly all of these are minor reactions, such as soreness at the injection site or a mild fever. A slight reaction actually shows that the vaccine is creating antibodies which protect against disease. More serious side effects are rare, but may include a severe allergic reaction. See your doctor or immunisation nurse for more information.

### Protecting Everyone

Environments such as education and care services bring groups of children close together where disease can spread more easily and quickly. Young children also interact physically through touch and can easily spread germs to each other in this way. Coughing and sneezing can be uncontrolled. High immunisation rates in both staff and children protect vulnerable people who are very young or cannot be vaccinated.



### Pregnant Staff

Pregnant staff may be more at risk of complications for themselves and their baby when exposed to disease. It is highly recommended that early childhood staff who are planning a family are up to date with the vaccinations listed on this brochure before becoming pregnant. Discuss with your doctor or immunisation nurse.



### Providing Immunisation Records to your Employer

When you start work in education and care services, your employer will request a record of your vaccinations. Your previous vaccinations may be recorded on your Personal Health Record book, through your GP or on the Queensland Health Vaccination Register (VIVAS) or Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR). You can contact the ACIR Childhood Register on 1800 653 809 for a copy of your vaccinations since 1996.

### What if I choose not to be immunised?

Immunisation is a personal responsibility. Early childhood staff are required, if unimmunised and exposed to disease, to be treated and/or be excluded from the workplace for a set period of time. This varies depending on the disease. There have been many outbreaks in education and care services requiring staff to take antibiotics again and take more time off work. Staff who are immunised and well can normally continue to work. You need to let your employer know if you choose not to be immunised.

If you are unsure about whether to become immunised, talk to your local GP or immunisation nurse. You can also talk to a public health nurse at your local Public Health Unit.





## Guidelines for Educators and Staff when Exposed to Vaccine Preventable Diseases

Having up to date vaccinations decreases the risk of exposure to serious diseases in education and care services. If any infectious disease is suspected or confirmed in your service, notify your local Public Health Unit for assistance and advice. There are additional notifiable diseases to the ones listed here. Refer to the latest 'Time Out' poster and 'Staying Healthy. Preventing Infectious Diseases in Early Childhood Education and Care Services' for more information.



### Whooping cough (pertussis)

Exposed staff who have not had a booster vaccination within the last 10 years must take antibiotics or be excluded from work.

### Tetanus

Unimmunised staff are at risk of tetanus from the environment and animals.

### Measles, Diphtheria

Exposed unimmunised staff will need vaccination, treatment and/or exclusion from work.

### Rubella, Varicella, Mumps

Exposed unimmunised staff will need vaccination, but can stay at work unless they become unwell. Exposed pregnant staff may be excluded from work and should see their doctor immediately and notify their local Public Health Unit. All female staff of childbearing age should check their immunity to rubella with their GP and ensure they are up to date with their vaccinations.

### Hepatitis A

Unimmunised staff will need vaccination and treatment.

### Influenza

Annual vaccination is recommended. Stay away from work if you become unwell. Ensure strict hygiene and cough etiquette measures are in place.

For detailed advice on exposure to disease, contact your local Public Health Unit.



## FOR MORE INFORMATION

For further advice and information on immunisation or any of these diseases, contact your GP, immunisation provider or your nearest Public Health Unit.

Public Health Units in Qld	Telephone
Brisbane North	3624 1111
Brisbane South	3000 9148
Calrns	4226 5555
Central Queensland (Rockhampton)	4920 6989
Central West	4652 6000
Darling Downs (Toowoomba)	4631 9888
Gold Coast	5668 3700
Logan	3412 2989
Mackay	4911 0400
Moreton Bay (Redcliffe)	3142 1800
Mount Isa and Gulf	4744 9100
South West	4656 8100
Sunshine Coast	5409 6600
Townsville	4753 9000
West Moreton (Ipswich)	3413 1200
Wide Bay (Bundaberg)	4150 2780
Wide Bay (Hervey Bay)	4184 1800

For additional information, please refer to the NHMRC publication "Staying Healthy. Preventing infectious diseases in early childhood education and care services" 5th Edition at:

[www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/index.htm](http://www.nhmrc.gov.au/publications/index.htm)

or the Queensland Health website at [www.access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/](http://www.access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/) for fact sheets about various communicable diseases.

See [www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation/publications\\_fs/pamphlets.asp](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation/publications_fs/pamphlets.asp) for an electronic copy of this brochure.

This brochure was developed by the Sunshine Coast Public Health Unit with input from education and care services and early childhood registered training organisations.

June 2012



