

Vaccine Recommendations and School or Daycare Rules: What is the difference?

There are a number of vaccines available to best protect an individual child and these should be given at certain ages and are, in general, referred to as the “recommended vaccines”. These are listed on the “Recommended Immunization Schedules for Persons Birth through 18 Years” at www.cdc.gov/vaccines.

Since many vaccine preventable diseases are easily spread among children (like measles and chickenpox), there are Communicable Disease (CD) rules in place to best protect children when in close contact with others. These are commonly referred to as the “required” vaccines for day-care and school. These rules are state law and can be different in each state.

Recommended Vaccines (A Standard of Care)

- Healthcare providers follow the recommended immunization schedule because it provides the best and most complete protection against disease
- All recommended vaccines should be given to everyone at the indicated age, unless a medical condition that prevents vaccination is present
- Recommendations are based on health and safety considerations for the entire population
- Recommended vaccines prevent diseases that can be serious or potentially cause long-term health problems or death

Required Vaccines

(Mandated by each state government)

- These rules protect healthy children from some serious diseases and also protect children who can't be vaccinated (for instance, a child with cancer).
- Michigan requires certain vaccines for entry into childcare, preschool and school, but strongly encourages parents and providers to follow the recommended schedule for vaccination
- By following the recommended schedule, Michigan's school immunization requirements will be met

Why are certain vaccines required?

Vaccines provide protection against serious disease for the person receiving them. They also provide protection to classmates and teachers by reducing the number of people who are at risk of disease. When enough people are vaccinated, the diseases tend to stop circulating. Children are particularly at risk for disease in a school, preschool or childcare setting, due to outbreaks of disease that may occur more frequently in these settings.

There are other vaccine-preventable diseases that can also harm your child—like hepatitis A, HPV (which causes cancer), and influenza. These are not part of the rules for different reasons. For example, flu vaccine is not given all year round and may not be available at the start of a school year. However, these diseases do cause harm and vaccine should be received.

What will provide the best protection from disease?

By following the recommended immunization schedule you are receiving the best protection from all vaccine-preventable diseases. It will also provide the most complete protection for the community, which will help ensure schools, preschools and childcare settings are protected.