

Pediatric Hepatitis B Vaccination Refresher

Although the dosing schedule for administration of hepatitis B vaccine has not changed, it continues to be the vaccine most likely to have been administered too early, thereby invalid, requiring an additional dose.

SCHEDULING HEP B DOSES

Immunization records of children enrolling or returning to child care and school are reviewed by nurses and administrators to assure compliance with Vermont's immunization regulation. Most child care programs and schools use some combination of electronic health record (school nurse software and/or the Vermont Immunization Registry) to assess adherence to the minimum age, and interval between vaccine doses. These EHRs allow for a 4-day grace period, therefore doses identified as invalid are 5 or more days outside of recommendations. Although the dosing schedule for administration of hepatitis B vaccine has not changed, it continues to be the vaccine most likely to have been administered too early, thereby invalid, requiring an additional dose.

Here are the detailed spacing requirements for Hepatitis B vaccine administration:

- minimum interval between dose 1 and 2 is 4 weeks
- minimum interval between dose 2 and 3 is 8 weeks
- minimum interval between dose 1 and 3 is 16 weeks
- minimum age for the final dose is 24 weeks

The two most common scenarios for an invalid dose are:

- A child comes in late for their four-month dose, and on time for their six-month dose, not adhering to the 8 week interval between dose 2 and 3.
- A child comes in early for their six-month dose, receiving their final dose when younger than 24 weeks of age.

INVALID HEP B DOSE- CHILDCARE OR SCHOOL ADMITTANCE?

When invalid doses are identified, children are temporarily provisionally admitted in child care or school, and an appointment must be promptly made for another dose of vaccine.

The hepatitis B vaccine series never needs to be re-started after long gaps between doses, simply resume vaccination to complete the series.

Practices are encouraged to use the Invalid Dose Report in the Immunization Registry to proactively identify patients before enrollment in child care or school and recall them for additional doses.

The Registry Forecaster can provide guidance around timing of vaccine administration.

If you have vaccine schedule questions, email the Immunization Program at AHS.VDHImmunizationProgram@vermont.gov, or call (802) 863-7638. For more information about using the Invalid Doses Report, the Forecaster, or other Immunization Registry reports, contact the Immunization Registry at IMR@vermont.gov or (888) 688-4667.