



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



Childhood Immunization Rates in Vermont Decline

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BURLINGTON – Overall vaccination rates for children age 19-35 months remain high according to the 2009 National Immunization Survey just released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). However, in looking at children who have had all of the recommended and available doses of vaccines that protect against 14 life-threatening diseases, Vermont children are now below the national average, and the lowest in New England.

"Most children in Vermont are getting vaccinated," said Health Commissioner Wendy Davis, MD. "But children need all of their doses of recommended vaccine to protect themselves and others from these preventable diseases. We know parents have many questions, and we want to make sure they have the answers they need. Vaccines are safe, effective and available."

As recently as 2003, Vermont had one of the nation's highest childhood immunization rates, however currently (2009), only 60 percent of young children in Vermont received all of the doses for all the vaccines recommended and available for their age group. The national average for vaccination rates among children was 70 percent.

Rhode Island (70 %), Maine (72 %), New Hampshire (73 %), New York (67 %), and Massachusetts (76 %) all had higher coverage rates than Vermont.

The recommended immunization schedule for babies includes vaccines that protect against the following diseases:

- Bacterial Meningitis
- Diphtheria
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Influenza
- Measles
- Mumps
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Pneumococcal disease
- Polio
- Rubella (German measles)
- Tetanus (lockjaw)
- Rotavirus
- Varicella (chickenpox)

Vermont earned praise from the CDC in April 2010 for having the nation's second highest vaccination rate for children ages 6 months to 17 years (72 percent) against the H1N1 influenza virus.

For more information on the immunization schedule and childhood vaccines, visit healthvermont.gov.

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