



Pat Quinn, Governor
Damon T. Arnold, M.D., M.P.H., Director

525-535 West Jefferson Street • Springfield, Illinois 62761-0001 • www.idph.state.il.us

July 1, 2011

Dear Health Care Provider:

On January 1, 2006, Public Act 94-0614, Mercury-Free Vaccine Act, became effective requiring vaccines to be mercury-free except for trace amounts. On January 1, 2008, the Act was amended to state "no person shall be vaccinated with a vaccine or injected with any product that contains, or prior to dilution, had contained as an additive, any mercury based product, whether at preservative or trace amount levels." Effective July 1, 2011, the Illinois Department of Public Health filed a statewide Declaration of Exemption on behalf of public and private health care providers for the following vaccines affected by the Act: Japanese Encephalitis; Tetanus and Diphtheria Toxoids Adsorbed; tetanus toxoid; Diphtheria-Tetanus, Meningococcal Polysaccharide; Hepatitis A/Hepatitis B (Twinrix); DTaP (Tripedia) and Influenza Vaccine 2011-2012 multi-dose formulations. The Declaration of Exemption is attached and is also available on the Department's Web site <http://www.idph.state.il.us/about/shots.htm>.

The Illinois Department of Public Health has long supported efforts to ensure vaccine safety and has been committed to using preservative-free vaccines for its Vaccines for Children programs, beginning in 1999. In accordance with the Act, it is the policy of the Department to preferentially distribute thimerosal free influenza vaccine to children ages 3 years and under, as served through its Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program. However, for the reasons cited in the Declaration of Exemption for specific vaccines, it is imperative that the people of Illinois continue to have access to life-saving vaccines when necessary, without potential compromise to health and safety.

If you have questions about Illinois immunization requirements, please contact Karen McMahan, Immunization Program Administrator, 217-785-1455 or TTY (for hearing impaired use only) 800-547-0466.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Damon T. Arnold, M.D., MPH". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Damon T. Arnold, M.D., M.P.H.
Director

Attachment

Improving public health, one community at a time

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