Did you know?
From July 2013 the National Immunisation Program schedule will contain a range of new vaccines. The changes will affect the 12-month-old, 18-month-old, four-year-old and adolescent schedule points. Read inside for more detail about the changes.

Introducing Priorix-Tetra®
From July 2013, 18-month-old children will receive their chickenpox (varicella) vaccine in a combination vaccine that also includes the measles, mumps and rubella antigens. This new quadrivalent (MMRV) vaccine is called Priorix-Tetra®.

The use of an MMRV combination vaccine will mean the second dose of MMR is brought forwards to 18 months of age in order to improve uptake and provide earlier protection.

DO NOT use Priorix-Tetra® at 12 months of age or as the first dose of MMR vaccine because there is an increased risk of febrile convulsions. MMR vaccine only should be used for 12-month-old babies or as the first dose if a child under four years of age is on a catch-up schedule.

MMR vaccine should still be used at four years of age for children who previously had Priorix® at 12 months of age and Varilrix® at 18 months of age. MMR vaccine will continue on the schedule at four years of age until the end of 2015. After this time four-year-old children will only need the one injection, Infanrix IPV® (DTPa IPV) vaccine.

Coming soon – Menitorix®
Menitorix® is a new combination vaccine containing *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) and meningococcal C antigens (Hib–MenC). Menitorix® is a single vaccine dose that will replace two injections, Hiberix® and NeisVac-C®, both of which are administered at 12 months of age. This means one less needle will be required at 12 months of age.

Further information
Immunise Australia Program website at <immunise.health.gov.au>
Alternative vaccine brands coming soon

**M-M-R® II**
M-M-R® II, a new brand of MMR vaccine, will be distributed to immunisation providers in the near future. You may hold stock of both Priorix® (current MMR vaccine) and of M-M-R® II in your fridge. Either MMR vaccine brand can be used at 12 months of age or at four years of age. You can use either brand for catch-up vaccination.

**Varivax®**
Varivax®, a new brand of chickenpox vaccine, will be distributed to immunisation providers in the near future. You may hold stock of both Varilrix® (current chickenpox vaccine) and of Varivax® in your fridge. Either brand can be used in adolescents between 12 and 13 years of age. You can use either brand for catch-up vaccination.

**M-M-R® II**
- a new brand of MMR vaccine

- M-M-R® II presents as a prefilled syringe of diluent to dissolve the MMR pellet in the vial.
- Store the vaccine in its box in the fridge between 2 °C and 8 °C.
- Administer the vaccine by the subcutaneous route only.
- Either Priorix® or M-M-R® II brand can be used for 12-month-old or four-year-old children.
- The four-year-old MMR dose will end in December 2015.

**Varivax®**
- a new brand of chickenpox vaccine

- Varivax® presents as a prefilled syringe of diluent to dissolve the chickenpox pellet in the vial.
- Store the vaccine in its packet in the fridge between 2 °C and 8 °C.
- Administer by the subcutaneous route only.
- Either Varilrix® or Varivax® brand can be used for adolescents according to the schedule.
- Monovalent chickenpox vaccine ceases to be used at 18 months of age on the schedule.

**Priorix-Tetra®**
- a new brand of MMRV combination vaccine

- Priorix-Tetra® presents as a prefilled syringe of diluent (sterile water) to dissolve the MMRV pellet in the vial. Shake the mixture thoroughly until the pellet is completely dissolved.
- The reconstituted vaccine dose is 0.5 ml and varies from clear peach to a fuchsia-pink colour.
- Store the vaccine in its box in the fridge between 2 °C and 8 °C.
- Administer by either the intramuscular or subcutaneous route.
- Priorix-Tetra® must not be used as the first dose of MMR vaccine.

What is unchanged?

Children who have already received their 18-month chickenpox vaccine should still be immunised with an MMR vaccine at their fourth birthday. This four-year-old MMR schedule point will remain until all children who are aged over 18 months at 1 July 2013 reach the age of four years – that is, by 31 December 2015.
Priorix-Tetra® – from July 2013

The National Immunisation Program schedule at 18 months of age will change from July 2013. Children will receive their chickenpox vaccine in a combination vaccine with their second dose of measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine. This new MMRV vaccine is called Priorix-Tetra®.

DO NOT use Priorix-Tetra® at 12 months of age or as the first dose of MMR vaccine. There is an increased risk of febrile convulsions when MMRV vaccine is given as the first MMR-containing vaccine dose. The increased risk of febrile convulsions is greatly reduced by giving an MMR vaccine as the first dose at 12 months of age.

MMRV vaccines are only recommended for use as a second dose of MMR-containing vaccine. This is because MMRV vaccine administered as a first dose is associated with an increase in the rate of febrile convulsions, which occur approximately seven to 12 days after vaccination at the peak of vaccine virus replication. Convulsions occur in six to seven out of 10,000 children. The risk of febrile convulsions is reduced when MMRV is administered as the second dose of MMR-containing vaccine in children aged less than four years.

MMR vaccine continues to be used at:
- 12 months of age
- four years of age for those children who previously had Priorix® at 12 months and Varilrix® at 18 months.

Priorix-Tetra® vaccine will be preallocated

All medical clinics, community health services, Aboriginal community-controlled health organisations and local councils will receive a preallocation of government-supplied Priorix-Tetra® before July 2013. After receiving this initial stock you can place orders using the updated order form available at <www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation>.

Reduce your government-supplied stock of Varilrix® vaccine

Priorix-Tetra® will replace Varilrix® vaccine for children at 18 months of age on the National Immunisation Program schedule. You will need monovalent chickenpox vaccine only for Year 7 secondary school students or adolescents aged between 12 and 13 years.

Live attenuated virus vaccine

Priorix-Tetra® vaccine is a live attenuated virus vaccine. It can be given on the same day as other live attenuated parenteral vaccines and other inactivated vaccines, using separate syringes and injection sites. If MMRV is not given on the same day with other live attenuated vaccines, there must be a minimum of 28 days separating the live attenuated virus vaccines.

What if the child has had chickenpox infection previously?

Priorix-Tetra® vaccine is administered at 18 months of age regardless of prior chickenpox infection. Previous chickenpox infection is not a contraindication to vaccination; as such, children should receive the MMRV vaccine. There is no known increase in adverse events from vaccinating those with pre-existing immunity to one or more of the vaccine components.
What if a parent wishes to protect their child from chickenpox earlier than 18 months of age?

Parents may wish to purchase a second dose of chickenpox vaccine on prescription to improve their child’s protection. Two doses of chickenpox vaccine can provide improved protection for a child against chickenpox. There must be a gap of at least four weeks between each dose. Chickenpox vaccine can be administered from 12 months of age. Live attenuated virus vaccines such as MMR and chickenpox can be administered on the same day, in different injection sites. If these vaccines are not administered on the same day they must be separated by a minimum of 28 days. Chickenpox vaccine and MMR vaccine administered separately on the same day does not increase the chance of a child having febrile convulsions.

How should the MMRV vaccine be administered to children less than 14 years of age who require a catch-up dose?

If a child is aged between 19 months and less than four years of age and no previous dose of MMR vaccine has been administered (or the child’s vaccination status is not clear or unknown), MMR vaccine should be administered as the first dose and then MMRV vaccine can be administered four weeks later as the second dose of MMR-containing vaccine. If MMR has previously been given MMRV can be administered as the second dose.

If a child is aged between four years and less than 14 years of age and no previous dose of MMR vaccine has been administered (or the child’s vaccination status is not clear or unknown), MMRV vaccine can be administered as the first dose due to the decreased risk of febrile convulsions in older children.

Display the MMRV poster

The Commonwealth government has produced a poster for you to display at your immunisation centre to inform parents and carers about the new combination vaccine.

The Commonwealth government will write to parents of eligible children about the change in the National Immunisation Program schedule at 18 months of age.

The use of an MMRV combination vaccine will mean the second dose of MMR is brought forwards to 18 months of age in order to improve uptake and provide earlier protection.
New vaccine brands to be used from July 2013 in the National Immunisation Program schedule for children

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age schedule</th>
<th>New vaccine brand name</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Antigen content</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>12 months and 4 years</td>
<td>M-M-R® II</td>
<td>MMR</td>
<td>Measles, mumps, rubella</td>
<td>• Either Priorix® or M-M-R® II brand can be used at either age.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The 4-year-old MMR dose ends at December 2015.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Menitorix®</td>
<td>Hib-MenC</td>
<td>Haemophilus influenza type b, meningococcal C</td>
<td>• A single vaccine dose replacing Hiberix® and NeisVac-C® vaccines</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>Priorix-Tetra®</td>
<td>MMRV</td>
<td>Measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox</td>
<td>• A quadrivalent vaccine dose replacing the monovalent chickenpox dose at 18 months and the 4-year-old MMR dose.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12–13 years (Year 7)</td>
<td>Varivax®</td>
<td>VV</td>
<td>Chickenpox</td>
<td>• Either Varilrix® or Varivax® brand can be used.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Monovalent chickenpox vaccine ceases to be used at 18 months of age.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vaccine brands that will no longer be supplied due to the introduction of the combination Hib-MenC vaccine

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Vaccine brand name</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Antigen content</th>
<th>Age schedule</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hiberix®</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>Haemophilus influenza type b</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Vaccines to be replaced by Menitorix®</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NeisVac-C®</td>
<td>MenCCV</td>
<td>Meningococcal C</td>
<td>12 months</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Notify the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR)

All vaccines administered to children less than seven years of age should be notified to the ACIR, in order to maintain a complete immunisation history for the child.

SAEFVIC – report an adverse event

In Victoria adverse events following immunisation (AEFI) should be notified to SAEFVIC – Surveillance of Adverse Events Following Vaccination in the Community.

This specialist service helps immunisation providers and the community manage children and adults who have had an AEFI. To make an AEFI report either phone (03) 9345 4143 or report online at <www.saefvic.org.au>. 
Updated resources

- Government-supplied vaccine order form
- National Immunisation Program schedule
- Preimmunisation checklist
- Vaccine side effects handout

To access these resources please visit <www.health.vic.gov.au/immunisation>

Recommended vaccines to be administered from July 2013 to December 2015 at 18 months and four years of age

18 month old
Priorix-Tetra® (MMRV)

Four year old
Infanrix IPV® (DTPa IPV)
M-M-R® II or Priorix® (MMR)

Contact
For further information on the Immunisation Section please contact:
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