



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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Margaret T. Donnelly
Director



Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor

January 2009

Dear Health Care Professional:

In an effort to raise awareness of Section 191.235, RSMo, a statute affecting the administration of certain immunizations, we ask you to review the enclosed information and ensure your practice and/or areas of professional responsibility reflect the requirements of the statute.

On April 1, 2007, Section 191.235, RSMo, was enacted in Missouri. This statute prohibits the administration of an immunization with more than one microgram of mercury per five-tenths-milliliter dose to knowingly pregnant women or to children less than three years of age. Mercury is a component of thimerosal found in few vaccines. Many influenza vaccines do contain this preservative and should not be administered to pregnant women and children less than three years of age. Preservative-free influenza vaccines are available and should be ordered, according to this statute.

If you need additional information, please contact the Bureau of Immunization Assessment and Assurance at (573) 751-6124. Our public health system relies on dedicated health professionals to ensure the health of Missourians.

Sincerely,


Margaret T. Donnelly
Director

Enclosure

www.dhss.mo.gov

Healthy Missourians for life.

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services will be the leader in promoting, protecting and partnering for health.

AN EQUAL OPPORTUNITY / AFFIRMATIVE ACTION EMPLOYER: Services provided on a nondiscriminatory basis.

Missouri Revised Statutes

Chapter 191 Health and Welfare Section 191.235

August 28, 2006

Mercury contained in immunizations, not to be administered to certain persons-- insurance reimbursement for nonmercury immunizations--exemptions, when.

191.235. 1. Beginning April 1, 2007, immunizations administered in the state of Missouri to knowingly pregnant women or children less than three years of age shall not contain more than one microgram of mercury per five-tenths-milliliter dose.

2. Beginning April 1, 2007, any health carrier as defined in section 376.1350, RSMo, doing business in the state of Missouri that provides insurance coverage for immunizations on a fee schedule or on a percentage reimbursement basis shall reimburse for immunizations not containing mercury at the same percentage rate of the usual and customary charges which were provided for immunizations containing mercury or other preservatives immediately prior to April 1, 2007.

3. The director of the department of health and senior services shall exempt the use of a vaccine from compliance with this section if the director finds, and the governor concurs, that an actual or potential public health emergency exists, including an epidemic, outbreak, or shortage for which there does not exist a sufficient supply of vaccine that complies with subsection 1 of this section that would prevent knowingly pregnant women or children less than three years of age from receiving the vaccine. The director shall determine the duration of such exemption.

(L. 2005 S.B. 74 & 49)

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Missouri General Assembly