

Tips for Finding Old Immunization Records



Your family's immunization history is important. Shot records are needed at doctor visits and to meet childcare and school immunization requirements. Your records may be needed for a job or international travel. If you have a copy of your shot record, keep it safe. If the record is lost, it can be a challenge to replace. Here are some tips on how to find old immunization records.

Where to look for old immunization records?

- **Family Records.** Look through family records, such as baby books. Remember to look through old papers, such as camp and medical forms.
- **Doctor office or clinics.** Check with all previous health care providers, including the local health department, where shots may have been given.
- **College/School/preschool or childcare provider.** Schools and licensed childcare providers must verify immunizations for students. Check schools or any childcare provider that was attended, to see what immunization records have been kept. For some teens, vaccines are required for college entry. Don't forget to check colleges attended to see if any records have been kept.
- **Military records.** The military may be a source of immunization information for those who served in any of the military branches.
- **An immunization registry.** The registry for Michigan is a confidential, computerized system for reporting immunization records. The registry has the ability to collect reliable immunization information and gather vaccine history from multiple providers.
 - Don't forget that sometimes when a physician retires or the medical practice changes hands, old patient records go to a storage unit. It may be possible to obtain records, for a fee, from the company.
 - Employers may be a source of immunization history. Employee required vaccines may be in an employee personal file.

What immunization records are in the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR)?

Immunization records have been stored in the Michigan Care Improvement Registry since 1994. MCIR is a lifespan registry. The Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR) requires the reporting of childhood vaccines through aged 19 years, and highly recommends the reporting of adult vaccination records. Not all records may be in the registry.

How to obtain an immunization record through MCIR?

Information about how you can find MCIR immunization records can be obtained from your physician, local health department, or MCIR website www.mcir.org. Computerized shot records for Michiganders are easy to find with MCIR. The registry provides a complete history of immunizations to help get needed vaccines at the right time, and provides printed shot records to use for daycare, school or camp registration. Immunizations given in another state may require contacting the registry in that state, in order to get a complete record. A list of registries can be found at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs.

What do I do if I can't find my record?

If the points above have been attempted and the immunization record is unable to be located, then the provider will discuss the next steps towards updating your immunization status. It may be necessary to repeat some of the vaccines or arrange for a blood test to determine immunity.

REMEMBER: Finding old immunization records can be difficult, almost impossible for adults. The key is to make sure all immunization providers give you a written record of the vaccines provided. It is your responsibility to remember to bring your immunization record to all medical appointments. It may be helpful to protect your record by putting it in a vinyl sleeve or zip-lock bag. If you keep a copy of your up-to-date immunization record, you will always be ready to report on your immunization history.