

# Medical Coverage Policy



**Blue Cross  
Blue Shield**  
of Rhode Island

## Pediatric and Adult Immunization/Vaccination

Device/Equipment  Drug  Medical  Surgery  Test  Other

<b>Effective Date:</b>	<b>6/1/2006</b>	<b>Policy Last Updated:</b>	<b>12/4/2012</b>
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**Prospective review is recommended/required. Please check the member agreement for preauthorization guidelines.**

**Prospective review is not required.**

### Description:

**This is an administrative policy to describe the coverage provided for pediatric immunizations for individuals aged 0 to 18 years and adult immunizations for individuals aged 19 years and above.**

The following is the Rhode Island General Law (RIGL) § 27-38.1-2 Coverage required for pediatric preventive care as stated below:

*(a) Every health insurance plan providing coverage for a dependent or minor child, other than school policies, shall include benefits for pediatric preventive care. All benefits shall be reimbursed in accordance with the reimbursement policies and procedure of each health insurer. Every health insurer shall provide benefits for pediatric preventive care or make that care available to its enrolled participants. Benefits do not need to be provided pursuant to this section for pediatric preventive care services that are paid for or offered free of charge by the state of Rhode Island. Benefits do not need to be provided for the cost of biologicals used for vaccinations.*

Immunization is the process of stimulating the body's immune system to protect against a specific infection. Minute amounts of the specific bacteria or virus, in whole or part, are specially treated so that when given to the patient, they will stimulate the body's immune system without actually causing disease. Some immunizations require "booster," or repeat doses of the same vaccine to keep up the body's protection against a specific bacteria or virus.

The Rhode Island Department of Health (RIDOH) provides certain biologicals for physician's offices and hospital pharmacies at no charge for children who meet the RIDOH vaccine distribution guidelines. The guidelines can be found at <http://www.health.ri.gov/programs/immunizeforlife/>

The Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services (CMS) has limited coverage for vaccines however, Blue Cross & Blue Shield of Rhode Island (BCBSRI) provides more generous immunization coverage for BlueCHIP for Medicare members.

### Medical Criteria:

Not applicable, this is a reimbursement policy.

### Policy:

Immunizations are covered when recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP).

### **Biologicals Supplied by the State:**

RIDOH provides biologicals for pediatric immunizations for infants and children 18 years and under only. For out-of-state providers please refer to the appropriate State supplied guidelines.

RIDOH generally **does not supply vaccines when ordered for an individual 19 years of age and older**. Exception: Meningococcal vaccine for meningitis is supplied for college-bound freshmen who would be residing in a dormitory.

Note: BCBSRI is assessed a vaccine tax which is paid to the State of Rhode Island in order for the Department of Health to fund the vaccine distribution program. Occasionally, a new vaccine is added to the immunization schedule by the AAP. Based on the 1989 Rhode Island State Mandate, immunizations added by the AAP to the pediatric immunization schedule are added to the list of State-supplied vaccines.

### **Non-Covered:**

Immunizations, as a requirement for school or employment or related to an employment exposure, are considered a contract exclusion for all BCBSRI products.

### **Coverage:**

Benefits may vary between groups and contracts. Please refer to the appropriate evidence of coverage or Subscriber Agreement for the applicable Adult Preventive Immunizations and/or Pediatric Preventive Immunization benefits/coverage.

Vaccines are not a pharmacy benefit. **EXCEPTION for BlueCHIP for Medicare Member's only: the following vaccines will be covered under the member's Part B Medicare Benefit:**

- Pneumococcal pneumonia
- Influenza virus
- Hepatitis B for individuals at high or intermediate risk
- Tetanus vaccines when directly related to the treatment of an injury or direct exposure to a disease or condition (for preventive purposes the vaccine will be covered under the member's Part D benefit).
- Rabies (post-exposure)
- **All other vaccines not mentioned above and associated administration fees will be covered under the member's Part D Medicare Drug Benefit Plan.**

### **Reimbursement Information:**

BCBSRI does not provide reimbursement biologicals for immunizations that are supplied by the RIDOH or any other state or federal agency.

### **State-Supplied Vaccines**

BCBSRI follows the Department of Public Health's guidelines when determining which vaccines are state-supplied. Refer to the Department of Public Health website for information on state-supplied vaccines as well as information on any vaccine shortages.

### **Non-State-Supplied Immunizations Purchased by the Provider**

Submit both the administration procedure code and vaccine/toxoid procedure code appended with a 22 modifier on the claim. Appending the 22 modifier identifies the vaccine as non-state supplied and indicates the vaccine was supplied by the physician which facilitates pricing of the claim to include allowance for the vaccine.

Note: Physicians treating out-of-state residents should use a 22 modifier when the vaccine is not supplied by the state.

### Claims Filing Information:

- Claims for State-supplied immunizations should be filed using the appropriate administration **and** vaccine codes.
- Evaluation & Management services should not be filed along with the immunization unless the E & M represents a separately identifiable service.
- Emergency Room and Urgent Care facilities should file **BlueCHip for Medicare** claims for the tetanus vaccine under the member's **Part B** benefit. For all other sites, providers must bill the member for the tetanus vaccine and the member must submit the claim through their Part D benefit.

### Flu Vaccine Retail Program

Beginning 9/1/11 (or as directed by the State of Rhode Island Department of Health), Rhode Island pharmacies can submit for vaccine administration and supply using the pharmacy claims system.

### Travel Clinics and Preventive Immunizations

BCBSRI's commercial plans cover immunizations, including those related to travel. This includes biological/vaccine and vaccine administrations. Vaccine administration includes very limited counseling regarding the specific vaccine. The services related to counseling a patient about their preventive or prophylactic medicine/vaccination needs, safety, exposure risks while traveling, etc. are not covered services. Travel Clinics should notify members of their financial obligation and may bill the member for the counseling services.

Use of incorrect CPT® codes (e.g., 99201 to 99215) may result in the member seeking payment from BCBSRI, as these are covered service codes. Travel clinic counseling services are typically reported using codes 99401 to 99404 (individual) or 99411 to 99412 (group). These codes are reported for the service of a physician or qualified licensed professional (a nurse practitioner or physician's assistant). Physicians/professional providers and institutional providers are not required to submit claims for preventive medicine services in order to receive a payment denial.

Services related to an illness acquired while traveling are covered by all plans. **BlueCHiP for Medicare plans do not cover vaccines related to travel, except as provided by Part D.** This exclusion also applies to the vaccine administration service.

### Covered Administration Codes:

**90460**  
**90461**

The definition of component was added to the CPT guidelines in 2012:

*A component refers to all antigens in a vaccine that prevent disease(s) caused by one organism ( 90460 and 90461). Multi-valent antigens or multiple serotypes of antigens against a single organism are considered a single component of vaccines. Combination vaccines are those vaccines that contain multiple vaccine components. Conjugates or adjuvants contained in vaccines are not considered to be component parts of the vaccine as defined above. (AMA 2012 CPT Codebook, Immunization Administration for Vaccines/Toxoids)*

**90471**  
**90472**

90473  
90474

**Note:** When administering multiple vaccines on the same date of service and by the same provider, claims should be filed using the administration add-on codes (90461, 90472, or 90474) appended with the number of units used.

**Covered Vaccine/Toxoid Codes:**

**Vaccines (\* in blue) are covered under Medicare Part B all others are covered under Medicare Part D.**

90476  
90477  
90581  
90632  
90633  
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90644  
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90749

The following immunization CPT codes are non covered/contract exclusion as they are not FDA approved:

90653  
90664  
90666  
90667  
90668  
90685  
90686  
90687  
90688

**Covered Travel Vaccine Codes:**

90690  
90691  
90692  
90717  
90725  
90727  
90735  
90738

The following codes for individual and group counseling are non-covered when used for travel immunization counseling:

99401 - 99404  
99411 - 99412

**Not Separately Reimbursed administration HCPCS codes:**

G0008 Administration of influenza virus vaccine  
G0009 Administration of pneumococcal vaccine  
G0010 Administration of hepatitis B vaccine

**Non-Covered (contract exclusion) Vaccine Code:**

90693

**Not Separately Reimbursed please use the appropriate CPT codes:**

**Q2035-Q2039**

**Also known as:**

Adult immunizations  
Pediatric immunization  
Travel Vaccines  
Vaccines

**Published:**

Policy Update, June 2006  
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Policy Update, Sept 2007  
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