



MEDIA RELEASE

Acting Minister for Health and Ageing

CHRISTOPHER PYNE

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Rotavirus vaccine

The Australian Government will provide \$124.4 million over the next five years to include free Rotavirus vaccines on the National Immunisation Program.

The Acting Minister for Health and Ageing, Christopher Pyne, said Rotavirus gastroenteritis caused severe diarrhoea and accounted for the hospitalisation of around 10,000 Australian children per year.

“Rotavirus occurs more frequently in young children, with almost half of all cases occurring in babies under 12 months of age and the majority of cases occurring in children under five years of age,” Mr Pyne said.

“Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children are affected much more seriously by this disease.”

Two Rotavirus vaccines will be included on the National Immunisation Program, Rotarix® from GlaxoSmithKline and RotaTeq® from CSL Limited.

The new vaccine will be given orally to babies from two to six months of age, commencing in July 2007. All babies born from 1 May 2007 will be eligible for the free vaccine. Two or three doses, depending on the brand administered, will generally be given at the same time as other immunisations at around two, four and six months of age.

Parents, carers and immunisation providers should contact their state or territory health department for further information.

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