

HEADLINE: Millions of Teens Under-Vaccinated Nationwide.^{1,2} Together, We Can Help Protect our High School Students Against Serious Infectious Diseases.

For any parent or guardian of teens, safety and health are high on the priority list, which is why our school nurse [INSERT NAME] is reminding teens and their parents/guardians about the importance of vaccination.

A MESSAGE FROM [INSERT NURSE NAME]

Parents/guardians: Check one thing off your “worry” list and talk to your teen’s healthcare provider to confirm they are up-to-date on their immunizations.

By age 16, most teens should have received the four CDC-recommended vaccines to help protect them against serious infectious diseases like meningococcal meningitis and human papillomavirus (HPV), which can lead to serious health effects and even death.³ Here is some background on the diseases the four recommended vaccines help protect your teen against:

- **Meningococcal meningitis**
 - Meningococcal meningitis is a rare but serious disease that develops rapidly and can claim a life in as little as one day.⁴ Of those who survive, approximately one in five are left with serious medical problems like amputation, deafness, and brain damage.⁵ Teens are at increased risk of meningococcal meningitis. This increased risk may be due to activities like sharing utensils and kissing.^{6,7,8}
- **Human papillomavirus (HPV)**
 - HPV can cause various cancers in both boys and girls.⁹
- **Tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (Tdap)**
 - Tetanus causes painful tightening of the muscles, usually all over your body; diphtheria causes a thick covering in the back of the throat and can also lead to breathing problems, paralysis, heart failure, and even death; pertussis causes coughing spells and can lead to pneumonia, seizures, brain damage, and death, particularly in infants.¹⁰
- **Influenza (flu)**
 - Flu can lead to fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, fatigue and more. Serious outcomes include hospitalization and even death.¹¹

Did you know...

1. Over the past three years, outbreaks of meningococcal meningitis took place on college campuses in Oregon and California.¹²
2. In recent years, 10,000-40,000 cases of pertussis¹³ (coughing spells that can lead to pneumonia, seizures, brain damage, and death) were reported.¹⁴
3. Each year, more than 30,000 new cases of cancer are found with causes related to HPV.¹⁵ Most of these cancers could be prevented by HPV vaccination at ages 11-12.⁹

References

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