



VACCINES FOR TEENS WITH OTHER HEALTH RISKS

If recommended by a health provider, teens with the following risk factors may need additional vaccines for hepatitis A, influenza or pneumonia:

- Traveling to foreign countries
- Living in areas of the United States with high rates of infection
- Having conditions such as asthma, diabetes, HIV, cancer, sickle cell disease, clotting-factor disorders, or diseases of the lung, heart, kidney or liver.



This brochure is made possible through an unrestricted educational grant from sanofi pasteur.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



“Now that I’m 16, why should I worry about a kids’ disease like chicken pox?”

Though often thought of as a disease of young children, chicken pox can also affect teens. When teens get the disease, they usually feel sicker than young children do and are more prone to complications.

MORE INFORMATION ON THE WEB

- TeensHealth, Nemours Foundation: www.teenhealth.org
- National Immunization Program, CDC: www.cdc.gov/nip
- Vaccine quiz for Teens and Adults: What Vaccines Do You Need? CDC: www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultImmSched
- Immunization Action Coalition: www.vaccineinformation.org



Teens Need Vaccines Too!



20 Brace Road, Suite 200
Cherry Hill, NJ 08034-2634
Phone: 856-857-9700 Fax: 856-857-1600
www.napnap.org



INTRODUCTION

Many people between the ages of 11 and 19 think they are done getting immunized. They think shots are just for little kids. But guess what? Teens need vaccines, too!

There are millions of teens who haven't gotten the shots they need. Vaccines can protect them against viruses and bacteria that can cause illness or even death.

Without vaccines, teens are at risk for diseases such as tetanus, diphtheria, hepatitis, measles, mumps, chicken pox, meningitis, flu and pneumonia, pertussis or whooping cough.



VACCINES AND DISEASES THEY PREVENT

Vaccines can prevent many of the diseases that pose a serious risk to teens. These immunizations are recommended for pre-teens and teens 11–19:

Meningococcal Meningitis

- Meningococcal meningitis, caused by bacteria, is extremely serious and can rapidly progress within 24–48 hours to brain damage, seizures, pneumonia or even death.
- This disease is spread through kissing, coughing and close contact, with special concern for college students living in dorms.
- **New vaccine:** Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) protects against meningitis.

Hepatitis B

- This very contagious virus is spread by contact with infected blood, which can occur through having unprotected sex, sharing drug needles, sharing razors or toothbrushes, or getting tattoos.
- Infection can be present without symptoms.
- Chronic infection can cause liver disease, including liver cancer.

Varicella/Chickenpox

- This very contagious virus can be spread through sneezing and coughing.
- Chicken pox can be serious and even life-threatening, especially in teens and adults.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)

- All three viruses are very contagious and can be spread through coughing and sneezing.
- Measles, mumps and rubella can be serious and even life-threatening.

Humanpapilloma Virus/HPV

- This very common sexually transmitted virus may cause no symptoms.
- HPV can cause cervical cancer and genital warts, often many years after infection.
- **New vaccine:** Recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for 11- to 12-year-old girls. Also recommended for 13- to 26-year-old girls/women who have not yet received the vaccine.

For more information on HPV and the vaccine, visit www.cdc.gov/std/hpv/STDFact-HPV-vaccine.htm#hpvvac11.

Pertussis/Whooping Cough

- These highly contagious bacteria may be spread through coughing and sneezing. Whooping cough may be life-threatening to infants.
- **New vaccine:** Tetanus-diphtheria-acellular pertussis vaccine (Tdap) adds pertussis disease protection while maintaining tetanus and diphtheria protection.

COMMON QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS



“My daughter doesn’t take drugs or anything dangerous like that. Does she still need a vaccine for diseases such as hepatitis?”

It’s true that sharing drug needles and other “high-risk” behaviors such as having unprotected sex can put teens in more danger. But everyday, routine activities also put teens at risk, including sharing a toothbrush, sharing utensils or food, getting a manicure, sharing a razor, getting ears pierced, kissing, or getting a tattoo. That’s why it’s important for all teens to get the full range of vaccinations to protect them.



“My daughter has asthma and needs a yearly flu shot. How can I be sure that she will get her shot if there’s a vaccine shortage?”

Vaccines are usually made available on a priority basis and are given first to those who need them most. If a shortage occurs, your health provider will put you on a list and call you when the vaccine becomes available. Teens who are away at college can stop by while on break or can get the vaccine through their college health service.

“I don’t have my son’s complete immunization record. Where can I get a copy?”



Unfortunately, there is no one place that has all vaccine information. Each person must keep his or her own record. Not sure where to look? Try these sources:

- Schools. Sometimes schools keep children’s vaccination records for a year or two after they last attended.
- State or local health department’s immunization program.
- Family records such as a baby book.
- Health provider, doctor or public health clinic records, which are kept for a limited number of years and only by the medical provider who actually gave the vaccines. More and more states are developing immunization tracking systems that track children and the vaccines they receive.



“My mom said that I had all of my shots when I was a baby. Why do I need more shots now?”

Teens need vaccines because:

- Some vaccines such as tetanus and MMR wear off over time and require boosters.

- There are new vaccines that weren’t available earlier for serious and deadly diseases such as meningitis.
- Children sometimes accidentally miss a dose or two of a vaccine. This may happen due to people moving or changing their health insurance.
- Teens often take part in group activities or live in close conditions at camp or college dorms that promote the spread of viruses and bacteria.