



Vaccines for Teens: Protect Their Future

Immunizations help keep teens healthy.

For Parents

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) recommend specific vaccines for teens* to protect them against infections that can cause severe illnesses or even death.

- New shots may have been added to the immunization schedule since your teen started school. You should check your teen's immunization status:
 - Before the start of middle and high school
 - Before college (or around the time your teen starts college)
- Some vaccines provide lifelong protection while others do not. Additional doses may be needed throughout one's lifetime. Be sure to talk to your teen's doctor if you have questions about any vaccine.
- Certain medical conditions, group living arrangements, sports participation and high-risk behaviors put teens at greater risk for these infections.
- If you or someone you know will be traveling to another country, be sure to ask your doctor about vaccines that may be needed.
- Immunizing yourself protects you and your family. If you provide a good example for your teen, he will learn to manage his own medical care.
- Proof of immunization will be required for entry into school (including college) and may be required for work, international travel or in the event of an accident.
- Take your teen's immunization record to each doctor appointment and to any trips to the emergency department. Be sure to ask about the Georgia Registry of Immunization Transactions and Services (GRITS), which collects immunization information.

* For the purpose of this brochure, the term "teen" refers to those who are between the ages of 11 and 19.

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B can cause liver damage, cancer and death.

How does it spread?

This viral infection spreads from person to person through contact with infected blood. This can happen through sexual contact or by sharing needles used for body piercing, tattoos or drug use. Hepatitis B also can be passed from an infected mother to her baby at birth. A person may show no symptoms and pass hepatitis B to others without knowing it.

Take action

A series of three shots or proof of immunity is required for all students attending schools or childcare facilities in Georgia. Some students need the hepatitis B vaccine to attend college in Georgia.

Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)

Measles causes a high fever and rash. It also can cause middle ear infections, swelling of the brain and pneumonia.

Mumps causes painful swelling of the cheeks and jaws. It also can cause swelling of the brain or spinal cord membrane.

Rubella (German measles) causes swollen glands and a red rash. In pregnant women, it can harm the unborn baby.

How does it spread?

Measles, mumps and rubella are all spread through close contact with infected people and through coughing or sneezing.

Take action

Two measles vaccine doses, two mumps vaccine doses and one rubella vaccine dose are required for all students entering Georgia schools, including colleges. If your teen did not receive a second dose of the measles and mumps vaccine at the start of middle school or before, it should be given at this time.

Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis

Tetanus causes violent muscle spasms and has the highest death rate of any vaccine-preventable disease.

Diphtheria causes a severe throat infection that can make swallowing or breathing difficult. It also can cause heart failure or paralysis.

Pertussis (whooping cough) causes coughing spells that can affect breathing, eating and sleeping. It can lead to pneumonia, seizures, cracked ribs or even coma or hospitalization. The disease can be mild for teens and adults, similar to a severe cough and cold that can linger for months. Adults and teens can spread pertussis to infants who have not had all their vaccines. Infants are at the greatest risk for serious problems and death.^{1,2}

How does it spread?

Tetanus develops when an open wound gets infected with bacteria. Diphtheria and pertussis spread through coughing or sneezing. Pertussis cases often can be traced back to a family member or someone at school.

Take action

Protection obtained from preschool shots does not last a lifetime and booster doses are needed. Teens should get the tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) booster vaccine. Proof of vaccination is required at the time of entry to Georgia schools, including colleges.

Influenza (flu)

Influenza (flu) can lead to pneumonia and death.

How does it spread?

This viral infection spreads through coughing or sneezing or when touching a surface with flu virus on it and then touching the mouth, nose or eyes.

Take action

There are two types of vaccines available, including a flu shot or nasal spray. Annual vaccination is strongly recommended for all children and teens from 6 months up to their 19th birthday as well as those attending college.³

Human Papillomavirus (HPV)

Human papillomavirus can cause cervical cancer in females and other forms of cancer or genital warts in both females and males.

How does it spread?

HPV is spread through sexual intercourse or sexual contact. Most people show no symptoms of infection.

Did you know?

- Each year in the United States about 6.2 million people get a new HPV infection.⁷
- Eighty percent of sexually active women will have acquired genital HPV by age 50.⁷
- The HPV vaccine is close to 100 percent effective.
- This vaccine is one of the few ways to prevent a type of cancer.

Take action

HPV vaccines are licensed for males and females ages 9 years through 26 years. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends routine vaccination of females ages 11 to 12 with three doses of HPV vaccine. The vaccination series can be started as young as age 9.

Varicella (chickenpox)

Varicella can cause serious health problems, such as skin infections, pneumonia and, in rare cases, brain swelling. Teens and adults are 10 to 20 times more likely to have serious problems.

How does it spread?

Chickenpox spreads in the air by droplets or through contact with fluid from inside one of the red, itchy blisters. A person is most contagious just after symptoms start and remains contagious until the last blister dries up.

Take action

A history of chickenpox or proof of two doses of vaccination is required for all students attending schools in Georgia, including childcare facilities and colleges. Teens who have not had chickenpox or the vaccine should receive two doses of the vaccine. These should be given four to eight weeks apart.

Meningococcal Disease (meningitis, septicemia)

Meningococcal disease is caused by a bacteria called *Neisseria meningitidis*, or meningococcus. The two most common forms are:

Meningitis is an inflammation of the membranes that cover the spinal cord and brain. (Meningitis has other causes as well, the most common being a viral infection.)

Septicemia is an infection of the bloodstream.

How does it spread?

This infection is spread through close personal contact. This includes sharing items that touch a person's mouth (such as utensils, drinks or lip balm) and through kissing, coughing or sneezing.

Did you know?

- Rates for meningococcal disease rise during adolescence and peak between the ages of 15 to 24.⁴
- College freshmen who live in dorms are five times more likely to be infected with meningococcal disease, compared to others the same age.⁵
- Of those who contract meningococcal disease, 10 percent to 15 percent die and 11 percent to 19 percent suffer mental disabilities, hearing loss, seizures/strokes or the loss of arms or legs.⁶

Take action

Two vaccines are available to protect against the four most common types of meningococcal bacteria, which account for two-thirds of the cases of meningitis in teens. It is recommended that teens receive the meningococcal vaccine. All Georgia colleges require students living in campus housing to document they have been vaccinated or that they have reviewed information about meningococcal disease.

Resources

Visit www.choa.org/vaccines to download a pdf of this brochure or to order additional copies.

CDC vaccine quiz:

<http://www2.cdc.gov/nip/adultImmSched/>

Childhood Immunization Support Program:

www.cispimmunize.org

Immunization Action Coalition's vaccine safety information:

www.vaccineinformation.org/safety.asp

Footnotes

1. Immunization Action Coalition's vaccine information, www.vaccineinformation.org/pertuss/
2. National Foundation for Infectious Diseases. www.nfid.org
3. Provisional recommendations for the prevention and control of influenza, www.cdc.gov/mmwr/PDF/rr/rr57e717.pdf
4. "FDA Approves Quadrivalent Conjugate Meningococcal Vaccine," *Infectious Diseases in Children*, February 2005; Volume 18, No. 2
5. A Look at Each Vaccine: Meningococcus Vaccine, www.vaccine.chop.edu
6. Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine—ACIP Recommends Meningococcal Vaccine for Adolescents, www.cdc.gov/vaccines
7. "Quadrivalent Human Papillomavirus Vaccine - Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices." Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Morbidity and Mortality Report (MMWR), 2007; 56:RR-2



American Academy of Pediatrics

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Georgia Chapter