



ROUTINE VACCINATIONS FOR ADOLESCENTS

Did you know that there are vaccines for adolescents that help protect them against serious, sometimes life-threatening diseases?

Even if immunized as a baby, preteens and teens still need certain vaccines to stay protected into adulthood. Ideally, children should receive these vaccines at 11-12 years-old. **If your child missed a vaccination at this age, it's not too late. Know which vaccines your children should be getting. It could save their lives.**

At-a-Glance

Routine Immunizations for Adolescents

Health officials recommend that all adolescents be vaccinated against the following diseases. Be sure to check with your doctor if you think your child has missed vaccinations.

Disease	Vaccine	Dosing Schedule
Meningococcal (meningitis, blood infection)	Meningococcal	1 Dose, 1 Booster*
Human Papillomavirus (HPV infection)	HPV	3 Doses
Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (whooping cough)	Tdap	1 Dose
Influenza (flu)	Seasonal Influenza	1 Dose every year

* A booster dose is recommended at age 16. For those who receive the first dose at 13-15 years, a booster is recommended at 16-18 years. CDC suggests that adolescents receive the vaccine or booster less than five years before starting college.

To access the full CDC schedule, go to: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/>

Meningococcal disease

Meningococcal infection, commonly called meningitis, can be very serious. The infection causes swelling of the lining around the brain and spinal cord or blood infection. It can progress very rapidly resulting in death within hours. Even with immediate treatment about one in seven adolescents with the disease dies. Approximately 20 percent of survivors suffer long-term disabilities such as brain damage, loss of kidney function, hearing loss or limb amputations.

People of all ages can get meningococcal disease, but adolescents are at greater risk than most. Sharing close quarters, such as crowded dormitories at colleges, boarding schools and sleep-away camps, appear to play a role in making this group more vulnerable. Vaccination can reduce the risk of contracting the disease.

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What are the symptoms?

Symptoms can appear suddenly and accelerate so quickly before becoming fatal that seeking immediate medical attention is critical. To complicate matters, early symptoms are a lot like a cold or flu so it's not always easy to know when someone has meningococcal disease. These include fever, headache and stiff neck as well as nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to light, rash and confusion.

What is the routine vaccination schedule for adolescents?

Meningococcal vaccination is recommended for all 11-12 year-olds, with a booster dose at age 16. For those who receive the first dose at 13 through 15 years of age, a booster is recommended at 16 through 18. CDC suggests that adolescents receive the vaccine or booster less than five years before starting college.

Influenza (flu)

Did you know that the flu and its complications claim an average of 36,000 lives and hospitalize more than 200,000 people in the U.S. every year? Most people with influenza are sick for about a week and will miss school, work, sports and other social activities, but for some it's much worse.

Anyone can come down with the flu, but school-age children are the most likely to get it. You can catch the flu by just being near a sick person when they cough or sneeze; it's easy to see how school creates the perfect breeding ground for spreading germs.

What are the symptoms?

Most people have fever, cough, sore throat, headache, chills, muscle aches and feel very tired. In serious cases it can also cause diarrhea and vomiting in children.

What is the routine vaccination schedule for adolescents?

Health officials recommend one seasonal flu vaccine each year for all adolescents up to 18 years of age, typically administered September through March. The seasonal flu vaccine contains multiple strains of the virus but it's important to know that flu strains change each year and that the vaccine is updated annually. Make sure your preteen or teen is vaccinated every flu season.

Human papillomavirus (HPV)

HPV is a virus that is spread through sexual contact and is the leading cause of cervical cancer in women. About 4,000 women each year die of cervical cancer in the U.S. Certain types of HPV cause other cancers including cancer of the vulva, vagina, penis and anus. It can also cause genital warts and warts in the throat.

HPV is frequently acquired during adolescence. About one in four adolescent girls contracts at least one sexually transmitted infection, the most common being HPV. Although in most cases the body's immune system will keep the virus under control or get rid of it completely, some people develop cell changes that may lead over the course of many years to cervical or other anogenital cancers.

The best time for HPV vaccination is before the first sexual contact, which is why it is recommended for adolescents regardless of whether or not they are sexually active.

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Two different vaccines are available to help prevent HPV infection. Both prevent most cases of cervical cancers and one of them also helps prevent vaginal and vulvar cancer in females and genital warts and anal cancer in both males and females.

What are the symptoms?

HPV can be in the system years before symptoms appear. In fact, most people don't have symptoms and unknowingly spread the infection to others. Certain types of HPV can cause genital warts in males and females and very rarely, warts in the throat. Cervical and other cancers might not have signs or symptoms until advanced. Screening can help detect disease in early stages.

What is the routine vaccination schedule for adolescents?

All adolescents 11-12 years of age should get vaccinated as a three-dose series at 0, 2 and 6 months. Vaccination is also recommended for girls and women up to 26 years of age and boys up to age 22 who have not yet been vaccinated or completed the vaccine series, and it may be given as early as age 9. Males aged 22 through 26 may also be vaccinated. Because the vaccine does not prevent all types of HPV infection that can cause cervical cancer, getting vaccinated does not eliminate the need for cervical cancer screening.

Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough)

These diseases can be very harmful and can be prevented with one vaccine called Tdap.

- *Tetanus* is an infection caused by bacteria found in soil that enters the body through cuts, scratches or wounds. It causes painful muscle spasms and can cause tightening of the jaw so the patient cannot open his/her mouth or swallow.
- *Diphtheria* causes a thick covering in the back of the throat. Breathing problems, paralysis, heart failure and even death can occur.
- *Pertussis* (whooping cough) is a very contagious infection that causes severe, uncontrollable coughing spells. A "whooping" sound can be heard when an infected person tries to catch his/her breath in between coughing fits, particularly in infants. Adolescents and adults usually have a milder form of pertussis, but they can easily spread germs to infants and younger children, who can become very sick or die from the disease. The "whooping" sound may not occur in adolescents or adults.

What is the routine vaccination schedule for adolescents?

Most children are routinely vaccinated at 6 years or younger. But immunity from pertussis, tetanus and diphtheria can fade with time. So even if immunized as an infant or toddler, adolescents age 11-12 years should get a dose of Tdap.

For more information on any of the above vaccines, please access the CDC's Vaccine Information Statements: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/vis/default.htm>.