IMMUNIZATION

Give a Teen Complete Protection

CDC

Adolescent Immunization

CDC National Immunization Information HOT LINE

ENGLISH: 800-232-2522

ESPAÑOL: 800-232-0233

Childhood immunization is not enough

Childhood immunization was a great start, but adolescents need additional protection. This is the time to make sure teens have not missed any of the recommended childhood vaccines. Boosters are needed to continue the protection of some of the vaccines already received. And more vaccines have become available since these young people were babies, thus providing defenses against even more diseases—especially those prevalent among adolescents and young adults.

Teens complain about getting immunized

Some people still think immunization is just for little kids. To dispel this idea, include the adolescent in the discussion, and appeal to the young person's emerging adult side. By explaining that immunization is something *almost everybody* needs throughout their lives, you will encourage responsible behavior that will last for a long healthy lifetime.

Why should *almost* everybody be immunized?

A few people cannot be immunized, and for a few others, the vaccines don't take. These people are at a higher risk of death and disability from preventable diseases. However, if a high enough proportion of your community is immunized, transmission of diseases that are passed from person to person may be interrupted. Thus protection is provided for those who cannot, themselves, be protected by immunizations.

In addition to protecting the immunized person from potentially serious diseases, vaccines protect your entire community by reducing the spread of infectious agents.

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800-232-2522 (English) 800-232-0233 (Español) www.cdc.gov/nip

SAFER • HEALTHIER • PEOPLE™

Tell me more.

We invite both health care professionals and consumers to call our CDC National Immunization Information Hot Line and visit our immunization website. We provide a wealth of reliable information on immunization, vaccines, and the diseases they prevent.

CDC Immunization Hot Line—English: 800-232-2522 Español: 800-232-0233 Website—www.cdc.gov/nip/

Which vaccines should adolescents receive?

4 Four vaccines are needed

Hepatitis B

Hepatitis B is the primary sexually transmitted disease we can immunize against. This disease infects over 140,000 people in the U.S. each year and kills over 5,000. It is 100 times more contagious than the virus that causes AIDS, and there is no cure. It is known as the "silent disease" because it can infect people without making them feel sick. In fact, nearly one-third of those infected have no idea how they got the disease.

Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)

Some teens born before 1985 might not have received a second dose of the MMR vaccine. If the second dose (or the first) was missed, it should be provided at this time. This 2-dose schedule is very effective, providing protection to more than 98% of the people vaccinated against these three diseases.

Tetanus, Diphtheria (Td)

Booster doses of Td are needed at 10-year intervals throughout a person's life. The first booster dose is especially important at the start of the active teen years because scientists have found that, among children previously vaccinated, immunity to tetanus decreases between 9 to 13 years of age.

Chickenpox (Varicella)

Any teen who has not had this disease and has not been already vaccinated needs to be safeguarded. This protection is crucial because complications—swelling of the brain, pneumonia, and even death—are a far greater risk for adolescents and adults.

3 Three more vaccines also should be considered

Influenza

Adolescents with certain medical conditions, such as asthma, have a greater risk of severe complications following influenza. They need this protection.

Pneumococcal Disease

Teens with certain medical conditions, such as a chronic illness or immunosuppresion, have a greater risk of getting pneumococcal disease. They should receive this vaccine as well as a booster shot 5 years after the initial dose.

Hepatitis A

Adolescents need protection if they live in U.S. communities or travel to other countries with high rates of hepatitis A. This vaccine is also essential for those who have chronic liver disease, are injection drug users, or are men who have sex with men.

Are the recommended vaccines safe?

Years of testing are required, by law, before vaccines can be licensed. And once in use, they are continually monitored for safety and efficacy. These vaccines are held to the highest standard of safety; however, no medicine is 100% safe. Even a medication as common and life-saving as penicillin can cause an adverse reaction in a small number of people. Vaccines are extremely safe, and improvements for both the vaccines and the immunization schedules are constantly being sought and implemented to make them even safer.