

## Get your kids vaccinated over the summer

School will be out soon, and many families will be getting ready for summer vacations, camps, and other fun activities. Before you start your summer, make an appointment for your preteen's



vaccinations. Making these appointments now will allow you to beat the back-to-school rush at the end of the summer vacation before school starts.

Vaccines help your kids stay healthy, and many states require certain vaccinations before school starts in the fall. While your kids should get a flu vaccine every year, there are three other vaccines for preteens that should be given when kids are 11- 12 years old. All of these vaccines are recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), the

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), the Society for Adolescent Health and Medicine (SAHM), and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

The vaccines for preteens and teens are:

- **HPV vaccine** for both boys and girls protects against the types of HPV that can cause cancer. HPV, short for Human papillomavirus, affects over 79 million people in the US and can cause several types of cancers and genital warts. The HPV vaccine is safe and effective.
- **Tdap vaccine** protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. Pertussis, or whooping cough, can keep kids out of school and activities for weeks. It can also be spread to babies; pertussis is especially serious and sometimes deadly for young children.
- **Meningococcal vaccine** protects against meningococcal disease. Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria and is a leading cause of bacterial meningitis—a serious infection around the brain and spinal cord.
- **Influenza (flu) vaccine**, because even healthy kids can get the flu, and it can be serious. All kids, including your preteens and teens, should get the flu vaccine every year.

Dr. Anne Schuchat, Director, National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases, wants parents to know that, “The vaccines for preteens and teens help protect your kids, as well as their friends, community and other family members from preventable diseases that could make them seriously ill. There are several opportunities when you can make sure your child gets the vaccines he or she needs—at any healthcare visit, including ones for sports or camp physicals.”

So get a head start on your child's health this summer, and get your boys and girls vaccinated soon. To learn more about the vaccines for preteens and teens visit: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/teens>