

It's their turn!

Pre-teens need vaccines too!



Why is North Dakota requiring that my child receive the meningitis and whooping cough vaccines?

The North Dakota Department of Health is concerned about the health of all residents and wants to make sure your child is protected against serious diseases. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that 11- and 12-year-olds receive the MCV4 vaccine to protect against meningococcal disease (meningitis) and the Tdap vaccine to protect against pertussis (whooping cough), diphtheria and tetanus. Starting in the fall of 2008, students entering middle school must be vaccinated with MCV4 and Tdap.

Are these diseases really harmful to my child?

Yes. Meningococcal infection can be very serious, even deadly. The disease can become deadly fast, sometimes in 48 hours or less. Even with antibiotic treatment, about 10 percent of adolescents who have meningococcal infection die. About 20 percent of survivors will have long-term disability, such as loss of limb, deafness, nervous system problems or brain damage.

Pertussis causes coughing so severe that adolescents can miss school or are unable to participate in sports or other social activities. Parents also may have to miss work in order to take care of a sick child.

I thought my child was already vaccinated against pertussis...

Protection from some childhood vaccines can wear off. The immunity from childhood vaccination against pertussis does not last into the adolescent years. A booster shot will help your child to continue to be protected against pertussis.

What other vaccines are recommended for adolescents?

Four vaccines are recommended for adolescents. Tdap protects against pertussis, tetanus and diphtheria; MCV4 protects against meningococcal disease; human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine for girls protects against cervical cancer; and the yearly influenza vaccine protects against the contagious respiratory virus, influenza. Adolescents also might need other vaccinations. Ask your health-care provider or local public health unit about vaccinations your child may have missed.

Are the vaccines safe?

Yes. The recommended vaccines are safe and effective. Before any vaccine is licensed and made available to the public, it must be extensively studied, and the FDA must approve it as safe and effective. These vaccines are also recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Academy of Family Physicians and the Society for Adolescent Medicine.

How much do these vaccines cost?

For families with health insurance, all or most of the cost usually is covered. Children 18 and younger may be eligible to get the vaccines free through the Vaccines For Children Program (VFC) if they are Medicaid eligible, uninsured, underinsured (have health insurance, but it doesn't cover vaccinations) or American Indian. Most childhood immunization providers and local public health units in North Dakota offer VFC vaccines.

For more information

Please visit www.ndhealth.org/Immunize or call 800.472.2180 or 701.328.2378.



NORTH DAKOTA
DEPARTMENT of HEALTH