

January 10, 2008

Dear Parent or Guardian:

Adolescence is an important time to ensure that your child is up-to-date on all recommended immunizations. In order to assist our school in the management of immunizations and to ensure your child has a permanent immunization record which can never be lost, we suggest that you enroll in the Immunization Reminder Information System (IRIS), Idaho's statewide immunization registry. To enroll in IRIS; please complete the IRIS consent form and attach an up-to-date immunization record for your child. Return both the IRIS consent and your child's immunization record to school.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) recommend that pre-teens and teens 11-18 years of age receive the following immunizations:

- **Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis (Tdap) vaccine**
The Tdap vaccine can protect your child from tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough). This is the first pertussis containing booster vaccine for those 11 years of age and older. Immunity against pertussis can decline in as short as 5 years making a booster dose of vaccine necessary to prevent the frequency and spread of the disease.
- **Meningococcal (meningitis) vaccine**
This vaccine can protect your child against bacterial meningitis (swelling of the lining around the brain and spinal cord). Meningococcal meningitis is a rare but serious condition that can be spread in crowded situations such as school, college dormitories, sharing sodas, or kissing.
- **Varicell (chickenpox) vaccine**
This vaccine can prevent chickenpox, which was once a common childhood rash. Chickenpox is usually a mild disease in children but is 10-20 times more likely to cause serious complications if contracted as an adolescent or adult.
- **Hepatitis A vaccine**
This vaccine can protect your child from a commonly transmitted virus that can be contracted from contaminated food. Traditionally, Idaho has had a high frequency of hepatitis A.
- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine**
This vaccine can protect girls 9 to 26 years of age from the very common human papillomavirus. The vaccine protects against 4 types of HPV, which is responsible for 70 percent of cervical cancer cases and 90 percent of genital warts.

The vaccines listed above are not currently required to attend school in Idaho, but may be required for college entry. Vaccinating your child with all recommended teen vaccines will protect the health of your child and other children. For more information about immunizations, contact your healthcare provider or your local health department.

Sincerely,
MaryLou Cunningham, RN, MSN