

It's Their Turn!

Pre-teens and Teens Need Vaccines Too!



Why does Arizona require that my child receive the meningitis and whooping cough vaccines?

The Arizona Department of Health Services (ADHS) wants to make sure your child is protected against serious diseases. For the 2011 - 2012 school year, students 11 years and older entering 6th - 9th grades* must be vaccinated with MCV4 to protect against meningococcal disease (meningitis) and Tdap to protect against pertussis (whooping cough), diphtheria, and tetanus. Tdap vaccine is only required if 5 years have passed since the child's last dose of tetanus/diphtheria containing vaccine. MCV4 is also recommended for 10th- 12th graders. These requirements support the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) recommendation that children 11 years and older receive MCV4 and Tdap vaccines.

Are these diseases really harmful to my child?

Yes. Meningococcal infection can be very serious, even deadly. The disease can spread quickly, sometimes causing death in 48 hours or less. Even with antibiotic treatment, adolescents die in about 10% of cases. About 20% of survivors will have long-term disability, such as loss of a limb, deafness, nervous system problems, or brain damage.

Whooping cough (pertussis) causes coughing fits that can be so severe that adolescents can miss school or be unable to participate in sports or other social activities. Parents may also have to miss work in order to take care of a sick child.

**School requirements for MCV4 and Tdap vaccination are updated yearly - adding an additional grade each year until all grades 6th - 12th are required to be vaccinated. For the 2012 - 2013 school year, 6th - 10th graders will be required to receive these vaccines.*

I thought my child was already vaccinated against whooping cough (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?

In addition to the Tdap and MCV4 vaccines, the CDC recommends that adolescent girls receive human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine to protect them against cervical cancer. Influenza (flu) vaccine is also recommended for all adolescents. Ask your doctor about vaccinations your child may have missed at an earlier age such as:

- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Polio (IPV)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
- Flu (Influenza)
- Pneumococcal (PPV)

Are the vaccines safe?

Yes, 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 is usually covered. Children age 18 and younger may be eligible to get the vaccines free through the Vaccines for Children program (VFC) if they are Medicaid eligible, uninsured, American Indian or Alaska Native. Parents can find a VFC provider by contacting their local health department.

For More Information

Please visit www.azdhs.gov/phs/immun or call your local health department or healthcare provider.

