



## What You Need to Know About Vaccinations for Preteens and Teens

Vaccinations help protect children from serious diseases. As an infant and toddler, your child may have received a number of recommended vaccinations as advised by your child's doctor. Your child may also have received vaccinations before entering preschool or kindergarten.

But did you know that protection against some diseases wears off as children enter the preteen and teen years?

Health experts recommend vaccinations for preteens and teens that can help protect against serious diseases, such as whooping cough. Some states may require vaccinations for school entry.

Here is the list of shots that health experts recommend, as of 2007, for preteens and teens:

### Recommended Vaccinations for Preteens and Teens

- **Tetanus, Diphtheria, and Whooping Cough (Tdap):** The tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough) shot, Tdap, is a single booster shot that helps protect against all three of the diseases mentioned above. Experts recommend that adolescents 11 – 18 years old get this shot, with the preferred age being 11 – 12 years. Adolescents who have previously received the Td booster (for tetanus and diphtheria) but not the Tdap should typically wait five years and then get the Tdap booster.
- **Human Papillomavirus (HPV):** The human papillomavirus shot, HPV, is given to girls to help protect them against certain types of the human papillomavirus, which can cause cervical cancer. Experts recommend that girls receive the first shot of the three-shot series at age 11 or 12 years, the second shot two months after the first, and the third shot six months after the first.
- **Meningococcal (MCV4):** The meningococcal shot, MCV4, helps protect against meningococcal disease. Experts recommend that adolescents get this single shot at age 11 or 12 years, or when they enter high school (at around age 15) if they did not get the shot before. This shot should also be given to college freshmen living in dormitories if they have not received the vaccine previously.

### Catch-up Vaccinations

It's also important to make sure preteens and teens are caught up on vaccinations they may have missed when they were younger, including:

- Hepatitis B
- Varicella (protects against chickenpox)
- MMR (protects against measles, mumps and rubella)
- Inactivated Poliovirus

### Additional Vaccinations

Some adolescents may need additional shots to help protect against hepatitis A, flu (*influenza*) and pneumococcal disease. Parents should ask their child's healthcare provider what shots are needed and when to get these shots.

**Please visit the National Association of School Nurses (NASN)  
at [www.nasn.org](http://www.nasn.org) for more information.**