



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE 07-12-11**

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## **Vaccines aren't just for kids- tweens and teens need protection too**

Stanton, MI- Not many things last forever. This is especially true when it comes to protection from childhood vaccines. Some vaccines protect for a short time or even years- but not necessarily your whole life, as is the case with tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. As children get older, protection offered by some childhood vaccines can begin to wear off and children 11-12 years of age need another dose to be fully protected.

Help children transition into their teen years in a healthy way by staying up-to-date on these pre-teen vaccines:

Tdap: The Tdap vaccine is recommended for preteens at 11 or 12 years for protection against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough). Those 13 - 18 years of age who haven't yet received the vaccination should do so.

HPV: The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine protects against the types of HPV that cause most cervical cancers and is recommended for girls 11 – 26 years of age. It is also recommended that boys and young men ages 9 – 26 receive the vaccine to prevent genital warts. If a teenager or young adult has not received any or all of the HPV shots (three dose series) when they were younger, they should ask their doctor about getting them now.

Meningitis: The meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) protects against the bacteria that cause meningococcal disease, such as meningitis or sepsis (bloodstream infection). The MCV4 vaccine is recommended for all preteens at age 11 or 12. A booster shot is recommended for teens at age 16 to continue providing protection when their risk for meningococcal disease is highest. Teens who received MCV4 for the first time at 13 - 15 years of age will need a one-time booster dose at 16 - 18 years of age. If a teenager missed getting the vaccine altogether, they should ask the doctor about getting it now, especially if they are about to move into a college dorm or military barracks.

Influenza: Everyone six months of age and older should get a flu vaccine each year, preferably in the fall, prior to the start of seasonal influenza season. It is especially important for kids with asthma or diabetes to get vaccinated to help decrease their risk of serious complications from the flu.

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Keep in mind that children from birth through 18 years of age may be eligible for Vaccines for Children (VFC), which provides vaccine at no cost to children who might not otherwise be vaccinated because of inability to pay. Qualifications include that the child:

- Is on Medicaid
- Does not have health insurance
- Is an American Indian or Alaskan Native
- Is under-insured

For more information regarding VFC, please contact Mid-Michigan District Health Department (MMDHD) at:

Clinton County: 989-224-2195

Gratiot County: 989-875-3681

Montcalm County: 989-831-5237

For more information regarding what immunizations your adolescent requires, please contact your primary care provider or Mid-Michigan Health Department.

*Mid-Michigan District Health Department serves the residents of Clinton, Gratiot and Montcalm Counties.*

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