

Is My Teenager Protected?

Parent's Guide to Vaccines for Teenagers



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Is Your Teenager Protected?

Some vaccines can protect your teenager from harmful illnesses such as chicken pox, meningitis, and cancer.

Below are the major vaccines that your teenager should get. If you think your teenager may be missing any of these vaccines, see your child's doctor.

Vaccines can be given to teenagers as early as 11 years old.

Tetanus and Pertussis Vaccine (Tdap)

Tdap is a new vaccine that protects against *tetanus* and *whooping cough*.

Tetanus occurs when you have an infection from a dirty wound. The illness can cause very severe muscle contractions and seizures.

Whooping cough (also called pertussis), is a serious illness which causes a lot of coughing. It is spread very easily and can be deadly to babies.

Your teenager probably got both of these vaccines as a child, but he or she will need a booster shot at 11 years old.

Meningococemia Vaccine

This vaccine protects against *meningitis*, a serious infection of the lining around the brain and spinal cord. It spreads easily among people living in small spaces (such as college dorms). This vaccine can protect your teenager from getting this disease and all it takes is one shot at 11 years of age.

Human Papilloma Virus Vaccine (HPV)

This vaccine protects girls against human papilloma virus (also called HPV), a major cause of cervical cancer and some types of genital warts. HPV infection is most common in teenage girls and young women.

This vaccine can protect your daughter from HPV infection and cervical cancer. The HPV vaccine can be given as early as 9 years of age, and the vaccine seems to work better when given at an early age. A total of 3 shots are given over 6 months.

Chicken Pox Vaccine

This vaccine protects against chicken pox. Chicken pox is an infection that results in small, red and itchy bumps all over the body. It is easily spread through coughing or sneezing.

Your child probably received a shot earlier but for full protection against chicken pox, your teenager will need a second booster shot.

Hepatitis A Vaccine

This vaccine is good for young children (1-2 years old), and for anyone going to areas where hepatitis A is common such as Southeast Asia.

Hepatitis A is an infection of the liver by the hepatitis A virus, and is spread by eating food or drinking water that has the virus. It can cause skin to turn yellow, vomiting, and diarrhea for as long as 9 months. Just 2 shots of the vaccine can protect your teenager.

Protect your teenager! See your child's doctor to check if your teenager has gotten these vaccines.