



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Shots for Teens

National and State Vaccination Coverage Among Adolescents Aged 13-17 Years — United States, 2011

Recorded: September 18, 2012; posted: September 20, 2012

[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Just because they're growing up doesn't mean they've outgrown vaccinations. Teenagers are at risk for certain diseases that can be prevented through proper and timely immunizations.

Dr. Christina Dorell is a researcher with CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. She's joining us today to discuss the importance of keeping teens up-to-date on vaccinations. Welcome to the show, Christina.

[Dr. Dorell] Thank you very much.

[Dr. Gaynes] Christina, what vaccines are recommended for adolescents?

[Dr. Dorell] There are three vaccines that are specifically recommended for pre-teens and teens. There is Tdap which protects against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (or whooping cough). The meningococcal conjugate vaccine is also recommended and that vaccine protects against meningococcal meningitis and other meningococcal diseases. And there's also the HPV vaccine and that protects against infection with the types of the human papillomavirus, or HPV, that cause most cases of cervical cancer and other HPV-related cancers. And all kids aged six months and older, including pre-teens and teens, are also recommended for influenza, or the flu, vaccine every year.

[Dr. Gaynes] So, what's the overall vaccination rate for the recommended vaccines?

[Dr. Dorell] Vaccination rates for Tdap, the meningococcal vaccine, and HPV vaccines have improved each year since we began measuring these rates in 2006. The rates for Tdap and the meningococcal vaccines are above 70 percent now. For the HPV vaccine, just over 50 percent of girls started the three-dose series and one-third received all three doses. Because the recommendation for boys to receive HPV vaccination has been out for a shorter period of time, vaccination rates among boys are much lower than for girls. About eight percent of boys have started the three-dose HPV series and one percent received all three doses. Flu vaccination rates will be reported later in the flu season.

[Dr. Gaynes] Christina, tell us a little more about that HPV vaccine.

[Dr. Dorell] The HPV vaccine is the only vaccine that we have that helps prevent cervical cancer and other HPV-related cancers. And remember – it's not just recommended for girls, but recommended for both boys and girls now. Parents should check with their children's doctor or nurse to confirm that their adolescents have received all recommended vaccines, including the HPV vaccine.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are adolescents more likely to be behind on vaccines than younger children?

[Dr. Dorell] Yes. Pre-teens and teens are more likely to be behind in their vaccinations, compared to younger children for a few reasons. Parents may be unaware that their pre-teens need vaccinations, too. And unlike infants and toddlers who visit their doctors very frequently, adolescents may have fewer visits and might not see their doctors for their annual preventive visits. That's why it's important for parents to remember to bring their teens in for a check-up each year and review their vaccination records to see which vaccines are needed.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are these vaccinations for teens and pre-teens required for school attendance?

[Dr. Dorell] School attendance requirements are made on a state-by-state basis, not by the CDC. So there are differences in which vaccines are required for middle school attendance by state, and these requirements often lag behind vaccine recommendations made by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices, or ACIP. Yet the number of states requiring vaccines for middle school entry is increasing. However, ACIP recommends that these vaccines be given to all pre-teens routinely, regardless of school requirements in particular states.

[Dr. Gaynes] Christina, where can listeners get more information about teen vaccines?

[Dr. Dorell] Listeners can go to the CDC website at www.cdc.gov and type in the search box 'teen vaccines.'

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Christina. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Christina Dorell about the importance of getting your pre-teens and teens vaccinated.

Remember parents - keep immunization records on your children and stay abreast of changes and updates in recommendations. If you're unsure, check with your child's health care provider.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.