

## *Protect your child from serious diseases that can affect preteens and adolescents*

Preteens and adolescents need vaccines to protect them from serious illnesses. Immunizations begin at birth and continue throughout life. These shots are an important step to maintain your child's health.

Meningococcal disease (meningitis) is a serious illness caused by bacteria which infects the blood or tissues around the brain and spinal cord.

- This germ can be spread from person to person by close contact.
- Common symptoms include a fever, rash, headache or stiff neck.
- It can lead to brain damage, disability and death.

Meningococcal vaccine (MCV4) can protect children and adolescents from this disease.

- This vaccine is usually given to 11-12 year olds (6<sup>th</sup> graders)\*.
- Because it is a newer vaccine, older adolescents may not have received it. Teens that have not had meningococcal vaccine should be given a dose.
- Ask your child's health care provider if he/she needs meningococcal vaccine.
- To obtain meningococcal vaccine and other immunizations for your child, see your child's health care provider or your local health department.
- For more information about meningococcal vaccine or other immunizations talk to your child's health care provider or call your local health department. Information is also available at Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website: [www.cdc.gov/nip](http://www.cdc.gov/nip)

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**There are vaccines that can protect preteens and adolescents from other serious diseases. 6<sup>th</sup> graders & teens need the following shots if they have not already received them:**

- 1 dose of meningococcal vaccine (MCV4)\*
- 1 dose of tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis vaccine (Tdap)
- 3 doses of hepatitis B vaccine (hep B)
- 2 doses of measles mumps and rubella vaccine (MMR)
- 1 or 2 doses of chickenpox vaccine (var), if they did not have the disease
- At least 3 doses of polio vaccine (IPV or OPV)
- Some children & teens may need hepatitis A and flu vaccine

\* As of May 19, 2006, vaccination of children 11-12 years of age is currently deferred due to limited supply of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4). High school freshmen and college freshmen living in a dormitory, who have not previously received MCV4 may be vaccinated during this time of limited supply.