



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health

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Chief Operating Officer

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March 1, 2023

Dear Parents of Rising Seventh Graders:

As a public health leader in Virginia and a parent, I value the many decisions you make every day to protect your child's health. I am sharing important information about the Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine. This vaccine prevents six types of cancer, including most cases of cervical cancer and certain cancers of the head and neck.

The Virginia Department of Health, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) strongly recommend this vaccine for children at age 11 or 12. Giving the HPV vaccine at an early age offers the best protection. I have provided additional information attached to this letter. You can visit our website for more information on obtaining school-required vaccines www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/.

As your child grows, it is important to schedule a check-up with a healthcare provider every year. If you do not have a healthcare provider, you can find a list of providers who administer immunizations as a part of our Vaccines for Children program on our website at <https://www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/vvfc/locatevvfcprovider/>. HPV, Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis), and MenACWY (meningococcalACWY), are school required vaccines for children attending Virginia schools and should be given before going into the 7th grade.

As a parent or guardian, you have the right to decide if your child receives the HPV vaccine. Please take the opportunity to review the enclosed HPV information and discuss the HPV vaccine with your healthcare provider. Please remember to give your child's vaccine record to his or her school.

Should you have any questions please contact Erica Hunter, Immunization Data & Outreach Manager, at the Virginia Department of Health by telephone at (804) 864-8057 or by email at erica.hunter@vdh.virginia.gov or Joanna Pitts, School Health Nurse Consultant, at the Virginia Department of Health by telephone 804-864-7590 or by email at joanna.pitts@vdh.virginia.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Laurie Forlano DO, MPH".

Laurie Forlano, DO, MPH
Acting State Epidemiologist

Vaccines for Preteens and Teens: What Parents Should Know

All boys and girls need three vaccines at ages 11-12 to protect against serious diseases. Preteens and teens should also get a yearly flu vaccine, as well as any vaccines they missed when they were younger.



What vaccines does my child need?



Dose 1: Ages 11-12
Dose 2: Age 16

Meningococcal vaccines protect against a type of bacteria that can cause serious illnesses. The two most common types of illnesses include infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and bloodstream. All preteens should get the meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MenACWY). Teens may also receive a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine (MenB), preferably at 16 through 18 years old.



Dose 1: Ages 11-12
Dose 2: 6-12 months later

HPV vaccine protects both girls and boys from future infections that can lead to certain types of cancer. Children who get their first dose on or after their 15th birthday will need three doses.



Dose 1: Ages 11-12

Tdap vaccine protects against three serious diseases: tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough).



Yearly Dose:
Ages 6 months and older

Flu vaccine helps protect against seasonal flu. Even healthy preteens and teens can get very sick from flu and spread it to others. The best time to get an annual flu vaccine is before flu begins causing illness in your community, ideally before the end of October. Flu vaccination is beneficial as long as flu viruses are circulating, even in January or later.

When should my child be vaccinated?

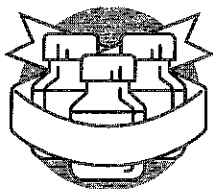
A good time to get these vaccines is during a yearly wellness check. Your child can also get these vaccines at a physical exam required for school, sports, or camp. **If your child missed any doses of recommended vaccines, ask your doctor or nurse about getting them now.**

Are these vaccines safe?

These vaccines have been studied very carefully and are very safe. They can cause mild side effects, like soreness or redness in the part of the arm where the shot is given. Some preteens or teens might faint after getting a shot. Sitting or lying down when getting a shot, and then for about 15 minutes after the shot, can help prevent fainting. Serious side effects are rare. It is very important to tell the doctor or nurse if your child has any serious allergies, including allergies to yeast, latex, or chicken eggs, before they receive any vaccines.

Can I get help paying for these vaccines?

Most health insurance plans cover routine vaccinations. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program also provides vaccines for children 18 years and younger who are uninsured, underinsured, Medicaid-eligible, American Indian, or Alaska Native. Learn more at www.cdc.gov/Features/VFCprogram.

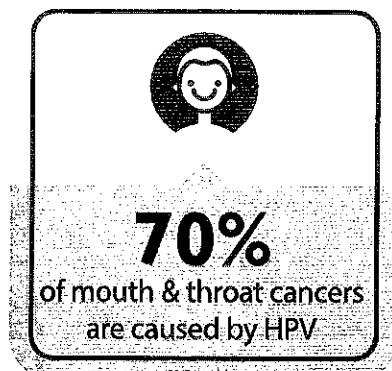
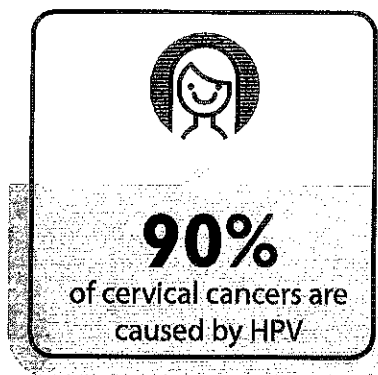


Talk to your child's doctor or nurse about the vaccines your child needs or visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents



TAKE A SHOT AT CANCER!

Protect your child from HPV-related cancers by **vaccinating**. The Human Papillomavirus (HPV) **spreads easily**, and most people don't know they have it.



The HPV vaccine protects your child's future.

The vaccine is recommended with other routine adolescent vaccinations



Meningitis



HPV



Tdap



Prevents



types of cancer

HPV can be prevented in both **girls** and **boys** through **vaccination**.
Boys and girls should **complete** the vaccine series by **age 13**.

Ages

9-10

Good

Ages

11-12

Perfect
Timing!

Ages

13-14

Still
Time!

Ages

15-26

Overdue

7th Grade



SAFE



EFFECTIVE



LONG-LASTING

Talk to your child's provider today about preventing cancer!

www.vdh.virginia.gov/immunization/requirements/

www.cdc.gov/HPV

VDH VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

FAQ – Tdap School Vaccination Requirement

What are the changes regarding the Tdap school vaccination requirement?

In April 2018, the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) changed the minimum recommended age for the tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis (Tdap) adolescent booster vaccine from 10 to 11 years. Although the vaccine is approved by the FDA to be given at a younger age as part of a catch-up-schedule, a routine adolescent booster dose of Tdap should be administered at no younger than 11 years of age.

To align with current guidelines, the Virginia General Assembly passed legislation effective July 1, 2019, that changes the grade in which students are evaluated for receipt of the Tdap vaccine from sixth to seventh grade.

Can a student be conditionally enrolled if the student is under 11 years of age and has not received the Tdap vaccination?

Yes. If a student under 11 years of age has not received a dose of the Tdap vaccine, BUT has had one dose of a tetanus, diphtheria, and acellular pertussis containing vaccine (e.g. DTaP), they may be conditionally enrolled in school. If a student does not have one dose of such a vaccine, they must begin a catch-up schedule. Once a student turns 11, they should receive the booster dose of the Tdap vaccine and are adequately immunized for their age and compliant with the vaccine requirement.

Should students under 11 years of age wait to receive the first dose of the Tdap vaccine?

Yes. If a student is following a routine vaccination schedule according to ACIP recommendations, a student must be 11 years of age to receive the booster of the Tdap vaccine. If the student is in need of a catch-up vaccine schedule, he may receive a Tdap vaccine as early as age 7 years.

An 11 year old, fully vaccinated, rising seventh grader seeks to enroll today. She received her Tdap vaccine at 10 years old. Will the Tdap dose be acceptable for entry into seventh grade?

According to the Code of Virginia, the student has met the requirement by having a Tdap dose prior to seventh grade. Thus, no additional action is necessary for school admission. Parents should consult with the student's healthcare provider regarding an additional Tdap now that the student is 11 years of age.

A 12 year old, fully vaccinated, rising seventh grader seeks to enroll today. He received his Tdap vaccine at 11 years old prior to sixth grade. Does he need to get another Tdap vaccine prior to seventh grade?

According to the Code of Virginia, the student has met the requirement by having a Tdap dose prior to seventh grade. Thus, no additional action is necessary for school admission.

An 11-year-old student inadvertently received a dose of Td instead of Tdap. He/She received a 5-dose series of DTaP in childhood. Does the student need to get the Tdap vaccine prior to admission to school? If so, how much time must go by before the Tdap can be administered?

Yes, the student needs to receive the Tdap vaccine. Td does not contain the required booster for acellular pertussis required prior to entry to seventh grade. The student should receive a Tdap vaccination dose as soon as possible.