

# Immunization

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## National Immunization Awareness Month

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). The goal of NIAM is to increase awareness about immunizations across the lifespan, from infants to the elderly. August is an ideal time to make sure everyone is up-to-date on vaccines before heading back to school and to plan ahead to receive flu vaccine.

### A Healthy Start (Aug 3-9)

National Immunization Awareness Month begins with a focus on immunizations for infants and pregnant women. Use the key messages below to inform expectant or new mothers about immunizations.

- Vaccines give parents the power to protect their babies from 14 serious diseases before they turn 2.
- Vaccinating your children according to the recommended schedule is one of the best ways you can protect them from 14 harmful and potentially deadly diseases before their second birthday.
- Children who don't receive recommended vaccines are at risk of: 1. getting the disease or illness, and 2. having a severe case of the disease or illness. You can't predict or know in advance if an unvaccinated child will get a vaccine - preventable disease, nor can you predict or know how severe the illness will be or become.
- Vaccines don't just protect your child. Immunization is a shared responsibility. Families, health care professionals and public health officials must work together to help protect the entire community – especially babies who are too young to be vaccinated themselves.
- Most parents are vaccinating their children. Estimates from a CDC nationally representative childhood vaccine communications poll (April 2012 online poll) suggest that most people are vaccinating according to schedule. In fact, 88 percent of parents reported that they are vaccinating according to schedule or are intending to do so.
- Most young parents in the U.S. have never seen the devastating effects that diseases like polio, measles or whooping cough (pertussis) can have on a family or community. It's easy to think of these as diseases of the past. But the truth is they still exist.
- Many vaccine preventable diseases are only a plane ride away. For example, measles is not very common in the U.S. because most people are protected through vaccination, but it is still common in many parts of the world. The disease is brought into the United States by unvaccinated travelers who are infected while abroad. Once reaching

this country, measles spreads quickly in unvaccinated populations.

View more on [immunizations for babies under 2](#) (Exit site).

The AAP also offers help with [communicating with parents](#) about their baby's vaccinations.

## Back to School (Aug 10-16)

Providers can use this week as a special opportunity to prevent cancer by making sure their recommendation for HPV vaccine is strong!

- **The Problem**

Our three-dose HPV vaccine coverage has risen only a fraction (to 37%) nationally and missed opportunities for vaccination are high. The CDC, AAP and AAFP recommend that all 11-12 year-olds receive HPV, meningococcal, and Tdap vaccines together. For each year we stay at current vaccination rates, girls and boys will go on to acquire cervical, oral, anal and other HPV-related cancers. Rates for the booster doses of MCV4, a meningococcal vaccine, are also lower than Tdap rates.

- **What can providers do?**

The most significant factor in parents' decision to vaccinate their children with HPV vaccine is a clear, brief, and strong recommendation from the child's healthcare provider. Research shows that simply changing the wording used to introduce the HPV vaccine makes a tremendous difference. **Try changing your discussion for one week, and see how it improves your vaccine acceptance.**

Start your vaccine discussion with all 11 and 12 year-olds and their parents by saying: **“Your child needs 3 vaccines today – HPV, Tdap, and meningococcal.”**

This simple change works because by putting HPV first, parents perceive that it's a normal, recommended vaccine, not a controversial or optional vaccine.

CDC provides a [“Tips and Time-savers for Talking with Parents about HPV Vaccine”](#) resource that translates research into effective communication tools.

### Other Adolescent Resources

- AAP - [Strategies for Increasing Coverage Rates](#) (PDF 42KB)
- CDC - [Frequently Asked Questions about HPV Vaccine Safety](#) (Exit site)
- CDC - [HPV Vaccine Information for Clinicians - Fact Sheet](#) (Exit site)
- [Adolescent Vaccination: Bridging from a Strong Childhood Foundation to a Healthy Adulthood](#) (PDF 1600KB)
- View the recommended [immunization schedule](#).
- Learn more about [school entry requirements](#).
- Coming Soon! - AAP PediaLink Course:

## Strategies for Recommending the HPV Vaccine

### Description

This course will discuss strategies for strongly recommending the HPV vaccine and will offer information to help pediatricians address their patients' concerns about the vaccine.

## Off to the Future (Aug 17-23)

Vaccines are not just for children. Immunizations are needed throughout life to stay healthy.

Getting ready for college or your future career means should include reviewing vaccine history and receiving any need vaccines. Because some diseases can spread quickly in settings like college dorms and classrooms, many colleges and universities have vaccination requirements for school entry.

Everyone age 6 months and older should have a flu shot every year. And every adult should get the Tdap vaccine once if they did not receive it as an adolescent, to protect against pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, and diphtheria, and then a Td (tetanus, diphtheria) booster every 10 years.

Learn more from the [NIAM Toolkit](#) (Exit site).

View the [National Foundation of Infectious Diseases Call to Action](#) (Exit site).

View the [Society for Adolescent Home and Medicine HPV Vaccine Updated Position Statement](#) (Exit site).

Learn more about [recent Meningococcal outbreaks at universities](#) (Exit site).

## Not Just for Kids (Aug 24-30)

All adults should get vaccines to protect their health. Even healthy adults can become seriously ill, and can pass certain illnesses on to others. Immunization is especially important for adults 60 years of age and older, and for those who have a chronic condition such as asthma, COPD, diabetes or heart disease. Immunization is also important for anyone who is in close contact with the very young, the very old, people with weakened immune systems, and those who cannot be vaccinated.

Learn more from the [NIAM Toolkit](#) (Exit site).

View the [Adult Immunization Schedule](#) (Exit site).

View [American Academy of Family Physician](#) resources (Exit site).

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