

## Vaccinate Before You Graduate

### Key Messages – Students

- Vaccines help protect against serious, sometimes deadly, diseases.
  - Vaccines are generally given by your doctor or school nurses and are primarily given as a shot in your arm.
  - Serious and potentially life-threatening diseases affecting teens and young adults that vaccines can prevent against include hepatitis, meningitis and measles.
  
- It is easier (and cheaper) to get vaccinated BEFORE graduating from high school.
  - After age 18, vaccines become a harder hit to your budget.
    - The Vaccines for Children program covers the uninsured and underinsured through 18 years of age.
      - Beginning at age 19, you are no longer eligible for this program.
  - Many students are still on their parents' health insurance plan while in high school – take advantage of it!
  - Your school health center and doctor's office are all able to administer vaccines or point you in the right direction, making it easy to get vaccinated.
  
- Whatever your plans after high school, being vaccinated is important and sometimes required.
  - Colleges, jobs and the military all have vaccine requirements.
    - Check with your specific school, recruiter or manager to learn what vaccinations are required for your specific path after high school.
  - When you travel, especially abroad, vaccines are necessary to keep you safe from foreign diseases.
    - You can learn more about vaccines and traveling here:  
[https://www.vaccines.gov/who\\_and\\_when/travel/index.html](https://www.vaccines.gov/who_and_when/travel/index.html).
  - Moving out of your parents' house opens up a new world of potentially contagious living quarters.
    - Places such as dorms, offices, hostels, classrooms, parties and sporting events make diseases even easier to spread.



- Meningitis, for example, is spread by close contact for an extended period of time (i.e., sharing a room). The disease is most common for infants less than one year old **and young adults ages 16-21** (Source, [CDC](#)). One of the most frightening aspects of meningitis is that it often presents as the flu, so by the time it's caught, it can be too late. When it strikes, it strikes fast and within hours a person can lose their limbs or die. Unfortunately, college outbreaks of this deadly disease have been on the rise in recent years.

### Key Messages – Parents

- Vaccines help protect your children against serious, sometimes deadly, diseases.
  - Vaccines are generally given by their doctor and school nurses and are primarily given as a shot in your arm.
  - Serious and potentially life-threatening diseases affecting teens and young adults that vaccines can prevent against include hepatitis, meningitis and measles.
- Make sure that your child is up to date on all of the recommended vaccines **BEFORE** they turn 19.
  - Even if your child was vaccinated when they were younger, they may not have received all of the recommended vaccines or they may need a booster dose.
    - For example, [a recent study](#) found that 79% of parents were not aware that their child was not fully vaccinated against all 5 strains of meningitis. Additionally, less than one-third of those who received the first-dose against the diseases have received the recommended booster dose.
  - Vaccines are more affordable for your child before they reach the age of 19.
    - The Vaccines for Children program covers the uninsured and underinsured through 18 years of age.
      - Beginning at age 19, they are no longer eligible for this program.
    - It's important to encourage your children to get vaccinated while they are still on your health insurance plan. Once they are off, it could be more expensive for them to get vaccinated, making it less likely that they will do it.



- No matter your child's plans after high school, being vaccinated is important and sometimes required.
  - Colleges, jobs and the military all have vaccine requirements.
    - Check with your child's specific school, recruiter or manager to learn what vaccinations are required for their next steps after high school.
  - If they plan to travel, especially abroad, vaccines are necessary to keep them safe from foreign diseases.
    - You can learn more about vaccines and traveling here:  
[https://www.vaccines.gov/who\\_and\\_when/travel/index.html](https://www.vaccines.gov/who_and_when/travel/index.html).
  - Moving out of your house opens up a whole new world of potentially contagious living quarters.
    - Places such as dorms, offices, hostels, classrooms, parties and sporting events make diseases even easier to spread.
    - Meningitis, for example, is spread by close contact for an extended period of time (i.e., sharing a room). The disease is most common for infants less than one year old **and young adults ages 16-21** (Source, [CDC](#)). One of the most frightening aspects of meningitis is that it often presents as the flu, so by the time it's caught, it can be too late. When it strikes, it strikes fast and within hours a person can lose their limbs or die. Unfortunately, college outbreaks of this deadly disease have been on the rise in recent years.