

Have a Preteen or Teen? Protect Them Against Serious Diseases

Leaving their phone at a friend's house, suddenly needing a ride somewhere ? you knew there would be days like this. But did you know that you'd also need to take your preteens and teens to get shots?

As they get older, kids are at increased risk for some infections. Plus, the protection provided by some of the childhood vaccines begins to wear off, so kids need a booster dose. You may have heard about pertussis (whooping cough) outbreaks recently. Vaccine-preventable diseases are still real. The [vaccines for preteens](#) and teens can help protect your kids, as well as their friends, community and other family members.

There are four recommended vaccines that preteens should get when they are 11 or 12 years old. If you have an older kid like a teen, they'll need a booster dose of one of the shots. It's also not too late to get any shots they may have missed. You can use any healthcare visit, including sports physicals or some sick visits, to get the shots your kids need. The vaccines for preteens and teens are:

* HPV vaccine for both boys and girls, which protects against the types of HPV that most commonly cause cancer. HPV can cause cancers of the cervix, vulva and vagina in women and cancers of the penis in men. In both women and men, HPV also causes mouth/throat cancer, anal cancer and genital warts.

* Tdap vaccine, which is a booster against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. Pertussis, or whooping cough, can keep kids out of school and activities for weeks. It can also be spread to babies, which can be very dangerous and sometimes deadly.

* Meningococcal vaccine, which protects against meningococcal disease. Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria and is a leading cause of bacterial meningitis – a serious infection around the brain and spinal cord.

* Influenza (flu) vaccine, because even healthy kids can get the flu, and it can be serious. All kids, including your preteens and teens, should get the flu vaccine every year.

Talk with a doctor, nurse or clinic about the vaccines for preteens and teens. Even though they may not realize it, your kids still need you for more than a ride somewhere. They need you to continue protecting their health by getting them these important and life-saving vaccines.

Want to learn more about the vaccines for preteens and teens? Check out www.cdc.gov/vaccines/teens or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.