



August 2018

Dear Parent or Guardian:

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As of July 2005, schools in Washington are required to make information available on Meningococcal diseases to parents or guardians of all students entering Grades 6-12.

Meningococcal Disease and Prevention

Meningococcal Disease

Meningococcal disease spreads by direct contact with infected persons by coughing, kissing, or sharing anything by mouth, such as water bottles, eating utensils, lipsticks, or toothbrushes. It can cause pneumonia, bloodstream infection, and meningitis (swelling of the covering of the brain and spinal cord). Severe disease can cause brain damage, loss of hearing or limbs, and death. Fortunately, this life-threatening infection is rare – usually only about 30-60 cases are reported each year in Washington, including 1 to 8 deaths. Adolescents and young adults are more likely to get meningococcal disease, especially if they live in group settings, like college dorms.

Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV4)

MCV4 protects your child against the most common types of bacteria that cause meningococcal disease. This vaccine and many others are available at no cost to patients younger than 19 years of age in Washington State. Healthy teens should get one dose of MCV4 during a pre-teen health check up at age 11 thru 12 years. Teens who did not get their first dose during the pre-teen health visit should get a dose at the earliest opportunity. A second dose, often called a booster dose, is now recommended. Teens should get it at age 16 thru 18 years or anytime before college. Teens don't need a booster dose if they got the first dose on or after the 16th birthday. Teens aged 11 thru 18 years with high risk conditions like HIV, absent or defective spleens, and complement component deficiency may need more doses of this vaccine. Ask your healthcare provider how many doses your adolescent needs for a full protection.

Learn More

Learn more about meningococcal disease and how to prevent it on the following Web sites:

Washington State Profile

Meningococcal information: www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/IllnessandDisease/Meningitis

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Meningococcal vaccine information: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/mening.html

Disease information: www.cdc.gov/meningococcal/about/index.html

National Meningitis Association www.nmaus.org

Human papillomavirus (HPV) Disease and Prevention

Human papillomavirus (HPV) Disease

What is HPV?

HPV is a common virus that is primarily spread through sexual contact. Up to 75 percent of HPV infections occur among people 15 thru 24 years old. Almost all cervical cancers and genital warts are caused by HPV. The types of HPV that can cause genital warts are not the same as the types that cause cancer. Some types of HPV can cause penile, anal, or head and neck cancers.

What are the symptoms of HPV?

Most of the time infected individuals have no symptoms and can spread the virus unknowingly. Some people know they have HPV because they have a symptom like genital warts. Women may find out they have HPV through cervical cancer screening (Pap tests) and HPV testing. Health care providers do not usually test for HPV unless they find abnormal cervical cell changes in a Pap test.

How can I prevent HPV

You can do several things to lower your chances of getting HPV.

Get Vaccinated: The HPV vaccine is effective. It can protect against diseases (including cancers) caused by HPV when given in the recommended age groups.

Get screened for cervical cancer: Routine screening for women aged 21-65 yrs old can prevent cervical cancer.

If you are sexually active:

Use latex condoms [the right way](#) every time you have sex. This can lower your chances of getting HPV. But HPV can infect areas not covered by a condom – so condoms may not fully protect against getting HPV;

Be in a mutually monogamous relationship – or have sex only with someone who only has sex with you.

HPV Vaccine

What HPV vaccines are available?

Two HPV vaccines are available:

- HPV4–protects only against four common HPV types. Two types that cause 75 percent of cervical cancer in women, and most anal cancers in men. Two other types that cause most genital warts in females and males.
- HPV2–protects only against the two types of HPV that cause 75 percent of cervical cancer in women.

Who should get the vaccine and when should they get it?

The federal Advisory Committee on Immunization Practice recommends that all girls and boys age 11 thru 12 years old should get vaccinated against HPV. As well as girls and women aged 13 thru 26 years who haven't gotten the vaccine yet. The HPV vaccine is not required for school in Washington.

Where can I find the HPV vaccine?

Ask your doctor, nurse, or local health clinic to find out more about HPV vaccine and where you can get it. In Washington, the vaccine is available at no-cost for all children through age 18 as part of the state Childhood Vaccine Program. Health care providers may charge an administration fee (this fee may be waived if patient can't pay) or an office visit fee. For people age 19 thru 26, most health insurance plans cover the vaccine for people recommended to get it.

For more information on HPV, the Vaccine, and Cervical Cancer:

Centers for Disease Control & Prevention www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd/hpv/public/index.html

American Sexual Health Association www.ashasexualhealth.org/

American Cancer Society www.cancer.org/content/cancer/en/search.html?q=HPV

Sincerely,
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