



COMMONWEALTH of VIRGINIA

Department of Health
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R. Christopher Lindsay
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/locatevvcprovider/>. HPV, Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis), and MenACWY (meningococcal ACWY), 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.

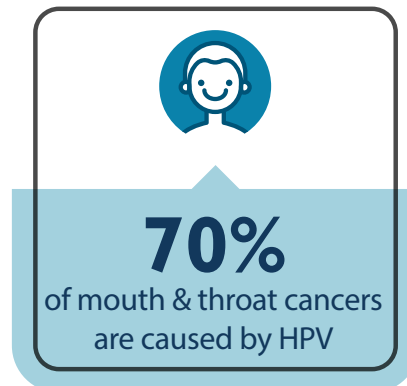
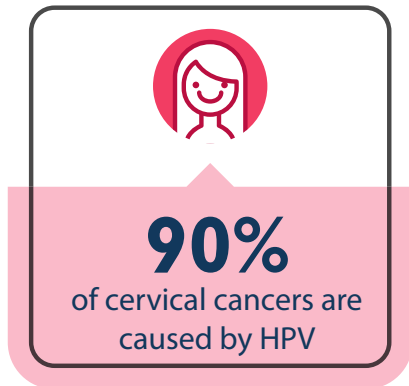
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads 'Laurie Forlano DO, MPH'.

Laurie Forlano, DO, MPH
Acting State Epidemiologist

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

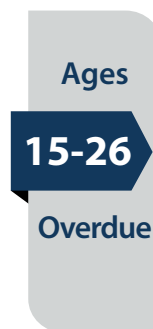


Prevents



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**.



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

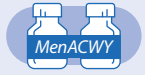
VDH VIRGINIA
DEPARTMENT
OF HEALTH

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.

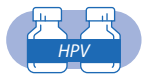


What vaccines does my child need?



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?

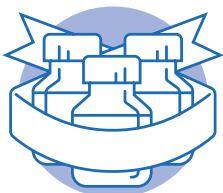
A good time to get these vaccines is during a yearly wellness check. Your child can also get these vaccines at a physical exam required for school, sports, or camp. **If your child missed any doses of recommended vaccines, ask your doctor or nurse about getting them now.**

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

