

[INSERT NURSE NAME], School Nurse  
[INSERT SCHOOL ADDRESS]  
[INSERT CURRENT DATE]

Dear Parent or Guardian:

It's hard to believe that outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases still occur. For instance, over the past four years, outbreaks of meningococcal meningitis, a rare but potentially deadly disease, took place on college campuses in California, New Jersey, Rhode Island, and Oregon.<sup>1</sup> And in recent years, there were 10,000-40,000 reported cases of pertussis.<sup>2</sup>

**The truth is millions of teens remain under-vaccinated against serious infectious diseases that can potentially lead to negative health effects, even death.**<sup>3,4</sup>

As your teen's school nurse, I want to remind you of the paramount importance of seeing that all 16- and 17-year-olds in your household are up-to-date on their immunizations. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers vaccination to be one of the best ways to help protect teens against serious diseases,<sup>5</sup> which is why it recommends that adolescents receive the following vaccines:

- **Meningococcal meningitis vaccine (MenACWY<sup>a</sup>, MenB<sup>b</sup>)**
  - Meningococcal meningitis is a rare but serious disease that develops rapidly and can claim a life in as little as one day.<sup>6</sup> Of those who survive, approximately one in five are left with serious medical problems like amputation, deafness, and brain damage.<sup>7</sup> Teens are at increased risk of meningitis, likely due to activities like sharing utensils and kissing.<sup>8,9,10</sup>
- **Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine**
  - HPV can cause various cancers in both boys and girls.<sup>11</sup>
- **Tetanus, diphtheria and acellular pertussis (Tdap) vaccine**
  - Tetanus causes painful tightening of the muscles, usually all over your body; diphtheria causes a thick covering in the back of the throat and can lead to breathing problems, paralysis, heart failure, and even death; and pertussis is a disease that can lead to coughing spells, pneumonia, seizures, brain damage, and death, particularly in infants.<sup>12,13</sup>
- **Influenza (flu) vaccine**
  - Flu can lead to fever, cough, sore throat, body aches, fatigue and more. Serious outcomes include hospitalization and even death.<sup>14,15</sup>

The CDC's 2017 Childhood and Adolescent Immunization Schedule now features a specific 16-year-old immunization visit,<sup>16</sup> which highlights the importance of scheduling visits for 16-year-old adolescent patients to see that they are up-to-date on recommended vaccinations to help protect them against serious infectious diseases. Help protect your teen and talk with their health care provider about which vaccines your teen might need. I can be reached at [PHONE NUMBER] and I am in my office [INSERT OFFICE HOURS FOR VISITS]. To learn more about adolescent vaccines, please visit the CDC's webpage on vaccines for children aged 13 to 18 at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/protecting-children/years-13-18.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/protecting-children/years-13-18.html).

Sincerely,  
[INSERT NURSE NAME]  
Your School Nurse

<sup>a</sup> MenACWY = Quadrivalent meningococcal vaccine that helps protect against invasive disease caused by serogroups A, C, W, and Y

<sup>b</sup> The CDC recommends MenB (serogroup B meningococcal vaccine) for certain adolescents at increased risk, e.g., students on college campuses that have recently experienced meningococcal B outbreaks.<sup>17</sup>

#### References

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