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IMPORTANT INFORMATION FOR STUDENTS ENTERING 12TH GRADE

The Iowa Department of Public Health made changes to the Iowa Immunization law regarding meningococcal vaccine. The change became effective with the 2017-2018 school year.

Students entering 12th grade born after September 15, 1999 need the following BEFORE the first day of school:

- 2 doses of meningococcal vaccine with the second dose given 16 years of age or older (applies to most students) OR
- 1 dose if received when student was 16 years of age or older

12TH GRADE STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY DOSES OF MenACWY MAY NOT ATTEND SCHOOL ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL. Students who have received 1 of 2 doses may attend school but will be given a short window of time to get the 2nd shot and may not attend after that time expires.

Our records show your student does NOT meet the new requirement. Please call your healthcare provider now! If you do not have a healthcare provider, please contact the school nurse for assistance.

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Frequently Asked Questions

How serious is meningococcal disease?

Meningococcal disease is a life-threatening illness that is caused by bacteria that infects the brain, blood, and spinal cord. Approximately 10-15% of people with meningococcal disease die even with appropriate treatment. Of those who recover, up to 20% suffer from serious after-effects, such as permanent hearing loss, limb loss, or brain damage.

Who is affected?

It easily spreads in crowded settings and typically affects older teens and young adults. The meningococcal vaccine requirement will help keep students, friends, families and communities safe.

How effective is the vaccine?

Meningococcal vaccines are very safe and are 85-100% effective at preventing infection.

Why are there two different kinds of meningococcal vaccine, and which one is required?

Meningitis is caused by different types of the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*. Five of these types are the most problematic and are preventable with vaccine. MenACWY covers four types and MenB covers one type. MenACWY is what is required. MenB is newer, and many providers are now starting to provide this in addition to MenACWY.

Where can I find more information?

Immunize.Org has an easy to read guide—Meningococcal: Questions and Answers—located here: <http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4210.pdf>

Where can my 12th grader get vaccinated?

Call your healthcare provider—it is usually possible to schedule vaccine only visits with a nurse in your provider's office. If you don't have a provider, contact the school nurse for a referral.

What happens if my 12th grader does not get the required doses?

12TH GRADE STUDENTS WHO HAVE NOT RECEIVED ANY DOSES OF MenACWY MAY NOT ATTEND SCHOOL ON THE FIRST DAY OF SCHOOL IN AUGUST. Students who have received 1 of 2 doses may attend school but will be given a short window of time to get the 2nd shot and may not attend after that time expires.

Where can I get immunized?

1. **Your doctor's office—please call now and schedule an appointment. This is the preferred option.**
2. **If you do not have a doctor and/or insurance, you may try contacting one of these providers. Assistance may be available through the VFC (Vaccines for Children) program.**

Any pediatrician or family practice office. Nearly all are carrying the vaccine, and many participate in VFC. This is a great time to establish a relationship with a new provider.

Polk County Health Department
286.3798

Broadlawns Family Health Center
282.2334

Primary Health Care
248.1500 or 242.8488
multiple locations: <http://www.phcinc.net/locations/>