

# MENINGITIS VACCINATION INFORMATION FOR RISING 11TH GRADERS

## Important Notice for Parents/Guardians of Rising 11th Grade Students

Meningococcal disease is a serious bacterial illness that affects the brain and the spinal cord. Meningitis can cause shock, coma and death within hours of the first symptoms.

To help protect your children and others from meningitis, Georgia law requires students be vaccinated against this disease, unless the child has an exemption. **Before starting the 2021-2022 school year, all students entering or transferring into 11th grade will need to provide proof of a meningococcal booster shot (MCV4) to the high school, unless their first dose was received on or after their 16th birthday.**

If your teen has not been vaccinated against meningococcal disease, we strongly recommend getting your child vaccinated. Getting MCV4 (meningococcal conjugate vaccine) now will not only help protect your child against the ongoing threat of meningitis, it will also meet the new school entry requirement.

Ask your pediatrician or local health department about other shots your child may need including:

- the human papillomavirus (HPV) series
- the tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis shot (Tdap or Td booster)
- an annual flu vaccine; and
- catch-up immunizations, including chickenpox, MMR (measles, mumps, rubella) and hepatitis B.

If your child does not have health insurance or their health plan won't cover these vaccines, call your local health department and ask about getting no or low cost vaccines. For more information, visit the [Georgia Department of Public Health School Vaccine page](#) or call (800) 848-3868.