



News Release

For immediate release: August 29, 2013

(13-125-revised)

NOTE: This news release was revised to correct a factual inaccuracy.

Contacts: [Marqise Allen](#), Communications Office 360-236-4072
[Kelly Stowe](#), Communications Office 360-236-4022

Teen vaccination rates in Washington show mixed results; national study

More young adults in the state get whooping cough immunizations; HPV vaccinations lag

OLYMPIA — Immunization rates for Washington teens improved for some vaccines, while holding steady for others. In 2012, 86 percent of teens aged 13–17 in our state got a Tdap booster, according to the National Immunization Survey. That’s up from 75 percent in 2011 and tops the national goal of 80 percent. Tdap is the vaccine that protects against tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough (pertussis). The increase is welcome news following the recent whooping cough epidemic in Washington.

“We’re delighted that more teens in our state are protected against whooping cough,” said State Health Officer Dr. Maxine Hayes. “Older kids and teens often spread the disease to babies without knowing it. That’s why it’s so important for teens to get a dose of the Tdap vaccine.”

Over the last couple years, more teen girls are getting all three doses of the HPV vaccine, but fewer are getting the initial shot. About 43.5 percent of Washington girls 13 to 17 received the recommended three doses of the vaccine, up 3.5 percent from 2011. Yet, only 64.5 percent of girls in the same age group got one dose of the HPV vaccine, a 2 percent decrease over the same time.

In 2012, nearly 15 percent of Washington boys aged 13–17 got the first HPV vaccine dose, up 6 percent from 2011. HPV vaccine was originally licensed only for girls and was made available to boys in October 2011. This, plus a lack of knowledge by health care professionals and parents on the need and recommendation to vaccinate boys, may be why the rate for boys is lower than girls.

HPV vaccinations are recommended for girls and boys to protect against cervical cancer, genital warts and other types of oral and anal cancers. Health care professionals should talk with parents about the importance of all kids getting HPV vaccinations starting at age 11 and 12. Kids in this age group have a stronger immune response compared to older kids.

“Parents want what’s best for their kids and want them to live happy, healthy lives,” Hayes said. “They can lower their children’s risk for HPV or cancer by getting them vaccinated.”

Nearly all sexually-active men and women will get at least one type of HPV at some point in their lives. HPV is most common in people in their teens and early 20s. That’s why it’s important for kids to get vaccinated before they start having sex. The vaccine doesn’t protect against any HPV strains someone already has.

Our state’s vaccination rate for two or more doses of chickenpox vaccine rose 8 percent in 2012. The rate for one dose of meningococcal vaccine rose slightly, from 69.4 percent in 2011 to 71.2 percent in 2012.

No-cost vaccines are available to kids up to 19-years-old through health care providers who participate in the state’s Childhood Vaccine Program. Participating health care providers may charge for the office visit and an administration fee to give the vaccine. People who can’t afford the administration fee can ask for it to be waived.

For help finding a health care provider or an immunization clinic, call your local health agency or the WithinReach Family Health Hotline at 1-800-322-2588.

The [Department of Health website](http://www.doh.wa.gov) (www.doh.wa.gov) is your source for *a healthy dose of information*. Also, [find us on Facebook](#) and [follow us on Twitter](#).

###