

## August is National Immunization Awareness Month

Parents can do a number of things to ensure a healthy future for their child. One of the most important actions parents can take is to make sure their children are up to date on their vaccines. Following the recommended schedule provides the best protection from serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases.

Preteens and teens need four vaccines to protect against serious diseases:

- quadrivalent meningococcal conjugate vaccine to protect against meningitis and blood infections (septicemia);
- HPV (human papilloma virus) vaccine to protect against cancers caused by HPV;
- Tdap vaccine to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough (pertussis); and
- a yearly vaccine to protect against the flu.

Teens and young adults may also be vaccinated with a serogroup B meningococcal vaccine. Adolescents need vaccines because they are at increased risk for certain diseases like meningitis and cancer causing HPV infections. It is important to get HPV vaccine before being exposed to HPV. Parents can send their preteens and teens to middle school and high school, and also off to college, protected from these vaccine preventable diseases by ensuring their children are up to date on their vaccines.

Along with helping protect preteens and teens from certain diseases like the flu, being vaccinated also helps stop the spread of these diseases to others in their family, classroom and community.

PharmaCare offers vaccinations to all ages and is able to bill insurance companies. Contact their vaccine specialist, Lisa Bohrer, R.N.,BC at 301-689-2909 for more information or to schedule an appointment.

For more information about vaccines or to view the vaccination schedule for children, teens and adults, visit [www.cdc.org](http://www.cdc.org).