



News Release

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Start the School Year Off Right; Get Up to Date on Your Vaccines

National Immunization Awareness Month reminds us about the importance of vaccinations

COLUMBUS, Ohio - Back-to-school season is just days away for some students, and that means parents are out getting supplies, new clothes and back packs. It's also the perfect time to make sure your kids are up to date on their vaccines.

Unvaccinated children are at increased risk for contracting vaccine-preventable diseases like measles, mumps and whooping cough. They also may spread such diseases which are serious or potentially life-threatening for high-risk individuals such as infants who are too young to be fully vaccinated and others who have weakened immune systems due to other health conditions.

Ohio has had 377 confirmed cases of measles this year, the largest outbreak in the U.S. since 1994. Ohio's mumps outbreak stands at 473 cases.

To emphasize the importance of immunizations for everyone, and to make sure that children in particular are protected with all of the vaccines they need, the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is joining the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in recognizing August as National Immunization Awareness Month.

"Getting children all of the vaccines recommended by CDC's immunization schedule is one of the most important things parents can do to protect their children's health and that of classmates and the community," said State Epidemiologist Dr. Mary DiOrio. "If you haven't done so already, now is the time to check with your doctor to find out what vaccines your child needs, and when."

Most schools require children to be current on vaccinations before enrolling to protect the health of all students.

Children who are 4 to 6 years old are due for boosters of four vaccines: DTaP (diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis), chickenpox, MMR (measles, mumps and rubella) and polio.

Youths who are preteens and teen-agers need Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis), MenACWY (meningococcal conjugate vaccine) and HPV (human papillomavirus) vaccines. In addition, yearly flu vaccines are recommended for all children 6 months and older.

Parents can find out more about the recommended immunization schedule at:
<http://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhprograms/dis/immunization/imunchsc.aspx>

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