

News Release

For Immediate Release

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Contact: Melissa Propp, RN, 308-345-4223

Do Your Students Have Their School Shots?

Where did the summer go? It is time for kids to head back to school and Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department (SWNPHD) encourages parents to make sure their children are up to date with regularly scheduled vaccinations. Crowded group settings like schools are a common spreading ground for many different types of viruses and bacteria.

Due to lower vaccination rates in the United States and throughout Nebraska the last few years, some disease like measles and whooping cough have made a comeback. In 2024, per the CDC Provisional Pertussis Surveillance Report, a total of 419 cases of whooping cough were noted in Nebraska. This year there has been one case of measles in Nebraska and a total of 1,333 measles cases throughout the United States. Over 90% of those cases were unvaccinated or had unknown vaccination status. Thankfully these diseases are easily preventable with regular vaccinations.

The shots required to attend school in Nebraska include the following:

Kindergarten Shots

- DTaP – diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough)
- Hepatitis B
- Hib (Haemophilus influenza B)
- MMR – measles, mumps, and rubella
- Pneumococcal (pneumonia)
- Polio
- Varicella (chicken pox)

Nebraska is one of the states that requires 2 doses of varicella. Chickenpox is a very preventable disease after the introduction of the varicella vaccine in 1995. This vaccine is safe and very effective, with over 90% protection against chickenpox after two doses. Hepatitis A is another shot that is recommended, not required, for kindergarteners.

Seventh Grade Shots

- Tdap – tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis
- HPV – human papilloma virus (recommended, not required)
- Meningococcal – meningitis ACWY (recommended, not required)

Meningitis vaccination is highly recommended for students and is required by most colleges. Meningitis is a life-threatening illness that is caused by bacteria that infects the blood, brain, or spinal cord. It is easily spread in crowded settings such as college dormitories, locker rooms, etc. There are two types of Meningococcal vaccines available that protect against several strains of this disease: Meningitis ACWY and Meningitis B. College students or parents should check with their college of choice to verify vaccine requirements.

Contact your health care provider to find out if your child is up to date on their vaccines or contact Melissa Propp, RN, Clinic Manager at (308) 345-4223. Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department serves Chase, Dundy, Frontier, Furnas, Hayes, Hitchcock, Keith, Perkins, and Red Willow counties. You can follow us on Facebook, Instagram and YouTube or view the website, which contains many useful resources at www.swhealth.ne.gov.

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