



COUNTY OF POLK
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Polk County Health Department News Release

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New Vaccination Requirement for 7th Grade Iowa Students

Beginning with the 2013-2014 school year the State of Iowa will require all students entering 7th grade and who are born on or after September 15, 2000 to provide proof of an adolescent Tdap booster vaccination before enrollment. This booster vaccination will protect students from tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (whooping cough).

“There was a 417% increase in whooping cough cases across the state last year and since the Tdap vaccination does not provide lifelong immunity, a booster vaccination for 7th graders will reduce the number of school outbreaks and keep kids in school,” said Rick Kozin, Polk County Health Department Director.

Polk County Health Department will be offering free Tdap vaccine for adolescents 10 through 18 years of age. Adolescent immunization clinics will be held on the following dates:

Thursday July 25, 2013 3:00 pm – 8:00pm
Tuesday July 30, 2013 3:00 pm – 8:00 pm
Saturday August 3, 2013 10:00 am – 3:00 pm

Please bring immunization records.

Vaccinations are also available at the Polk County Health Department by appointment Monday – Friday from 8-5 and until 7:00 on Tuesdays. Call 515-286-3798 for an appointment and bring your immunization records and insurance card.

There are other important vaccines recommended for adolescents, PCHD can also provide these vaccines free to adolescents who qualify and we accept most major insurances.

Whooping cough, or pertussis, is a bacterial infection that can sicken infants, children, adolescents, and adults. Pertussis causes children to develop a sticky, thick mucus that clogs the windpipe and causes painful spasms of coughing. When the child breathes in it causes a whooping sound and can make it difficult for children to breathe, eat, or drink. However, the

seriousness of pertussis goes beyond coughing, it can also cause pneumonia, seizures, and permanent brain damage. Most adults and teens can recover from whooping cough after several weeks of extreme coughing but it can be deadly for infants.

Mr. Kozin said, “Babies cannot be immunized until they are 2 to 6 months old so this leaves a window when they can be exposed to whooping cough by parents or siblings so a booster immunization for 7th graders will not only keep those kids healthy and in school but it can reduce the spread to other more vulnerable individuals.”

Since pertussis can be deadly for infants it is recommended that all adults over the age of 19 get a Tdap booster vaccination.