

## **News Release**

### **For Immediate Release**

June 14<sup>th</sup>, 2019

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### **Do Your Teens Have Their Meningitis Shots?**

Southwest Nebraska Public Health Department encourages all preteens and teens to get their meningitis (meningococcal) vaccination. Meningitis is a life-threatening illness that is caused by bacteria that infect the blood, brain or spinal cord. It is easily spread in crowded settings. You can catch meningitis from a person who looks healthy. Meningococcal vaccine protects against several strains of this disease.

“If your preteen or teen hasn’t gotten a meningitis shot previously, ask their doctor or nurse about getting the shot now, states Melissa Propp, RN, Public Health Nurse. “Meningococcal disease is rare but does occur in the United States, most frequently in college settings.”

Many colleges require a record of meningitis shots having been given prior to the start of classes. If you are traveling internationally to certain areas of the world, such as countries in Africa in the region known as the Meningitis Belt, you may also need this vaccine.

According to the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) all 11 to 12-year-olds should be vaccinated with a meningitis ACWY vaccine. A booster dose is recommended at age 16 years. Teens and young adults (16 through 23) also may be vaccinated with a meningitis B vaccine (meningococcal serogroup B). In certain situations, other children and adults may be recommended to get meningococcal vaccines.

Call your local health care provider today, to get your child vaccinated for meningitis. If you have questions about meningitis shots or other immunizations, call Melissa Propp, RN Public Health Nurse, 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 and Twitter or view the website at [www.swhealth.ne.gov](http://www.swhealth.ne.gov). Call (308) 345-4223 or stop by the office at 404 West 10<sup>th</sup> Street in McCook.

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