

# **News Release**

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## **New immunization required for 7<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> graders**

To help control the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases in Ohio, certain immunizations are required for children who attend school. Starting this fall, students entering the seventh and twelfth grades will also be required to receive the meningitis vaccine.

According to Mary Derr, R.N., director of nursing at the Knox County Health Department, the meningitis vaccine has been available and recommended since 2005, however, this is the first year it is required for school attendance. “For twelfth-graders, this would be a second dose booster of the meningococcal vaccine if a first dose was given prior to age 16, or it would be a first and only dose if there were no prior doses,” said Derr.

Students entering the seventh-grade also need the Tdap vaccine (Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis) which has been required since 2010 for school attendance.

“Many colleges require or recommend that their students have certain vaccinations such as those for meningitis and Hepatitis B,” said Derr, “depending on living arrangements and course of study.”

All vaccines required for school, including Tdap and those for meningitis and Hepatitis B, are available at the health department. Some pediatric offices also carry the vaccines.

“We encourage parents to check their child’s immunization records and obtain the required vaccines before the start of school this fall. Spring and summer are excellent times to get this done,” said Derr.

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Immunizations are available by appointment at the Knox County Health Department on Monday, Tuesday and Friday from 8 a.m. to noon and 1 – 4 p.m. and until 6 p.m. on the third Tuesday on the month. The health department also offers all childhood vaccinations at The Sanctuary in Danville on the second Thursday of the month from 3 to 5:30 p.m. To make an appointment at either location, call 740-399-8009.

Derr said the health department will be adding additional appointment times for immunizations this summer to meet the demand of kindergarten students and those needing the new required vaccines. Other vaccines recommended for teens can be discussed with health department staff or your private care practitioner.

The Knox county Health Department is located at 11660 Upper Gilchrist Rd, Mount Vernon. Parents or guardians are advised to bring their child's immunization record for verification of prior vaccines and proper documentation of vaccines given. The health department accepts most private insurances as well as Medicaid, United HealthCare Community Plans, CareSource, and Healthy Start Medicaid. For more information, visit the agency's website at [www.knoxhealth.com](http://www.knoxhealth.com) or call 740-399-8009

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