



THE FLORIDA STATE UNIVERSITY  
**UNIVERSITY HEALTH SERVICES**  
HEALTH & WELLNESS CENTER

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## **Vaccine Information - PLEASE READ**

*Many other extremely valuable vaccines are available that are not required but highly recommended to optimize a lifelong, preventive healthcare program.*

### **Bacterial Meningitis**

Young adults between the ages of 17-24 are at increased risk of developing a severe form of bacterial meningitis called meningococcal meningitis. The American College Health Association and the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) recommend that students consider getting the meningitis vaccine. This bacterial infection, although rare, may cause severe neurologic impairment, partial loss of limbs, or death (9-12% mortality rate). Living in residence halls, bar patronage, and exposure to alcohol and cigarette smoke further increase the risk of infection within this age group. The incidence in young adults is about one case per 100,000. For freshmen living in residence halls, it is 3.8 or more per 100,000.

The meningococcal bacterium involved with invasive disease, such as meningitis or sepsis (a bloodstream infection) is usually one of five different subtypes, called Serogroups A, B, C, Y, and W-135. The current vaccine does not stimulate protective antibodies to Serogroup B, but does against the remaining four types. In the past, Serogroup B caused about 50% of the disease burden in the U.S. but more recently, it has decreased to about 27% or less, making vaccination more protective against the other serogroups that have proportionately increased. The vaccine is safe and is estimated to protect for 3-5 years. For those who received a dose of vaccine at age 15 or younger, a 2<sup>nd</sup> booster has been recommended. Those who received a dose at age 16 or older do not need a booster dose.

### **Hepatitis B**

Hepatitis B is a serious viral liver infection, prevalent worldwide, which can lead to chronic liver disease and liver cancer. The State of Florida requires all school-age children to complete the three-shot series. Older students or out-of-state students may not be familiar with this recommendation. The Hepatitis B vaccine is extremely safe, effective and is required for any individual who may possibly be exposed to blood or other body fluids in their line of work or through sexual contact. We highly recommend getting this vaccine or at least discussing it with your primary care physician.

### **Polio, Tetanus, Tuberculosis**

Have your doctor review the status of your Polio and Tetanus immunizations. Tetanus is recommended every 10 years routinely or within five years for contaminated or deep puncture wounds. A one-time dose of Tdap (which includes a small booster dose of pertussis) may be given anytime beyond 2 years or more from a previous Td, especially if exposure to children or working in health care is ongoing. Usually given as a tetanus/diphtheria combination shot called Td, the tetanus vaccine boosters should resume the 10-year schedule following the onetime Tdap.

A skin test for tuberculosis called a PPD should also be considered at this time if your doctor determines you have been potentially exposed, such as working in a high risk clinic or institution, extended travel to at risk countries, etc.

### **Chicken Pox (Varicella)**

Chicken Pox (Varicella) is not uncommon among college students who have not yet experienced this childhood illness. Varicella vaccination is available and is highly recommended for all children, adolescents, and young adults who are susceptible to this viral disease. It is given as a two-shot series, one to two months apart. The vaccine is generally well tolerated; 3-5% of those vaccinated may experience a mild, varicella-like rash or low-grade fever, but complications are rare.

### **Hepatitis A**

Hepatitis A, another viral illness affecting the liver, is especially prevalent in developing countries and is most often transmitted via contaminated food and water. Outbreaks occur throughout the United States and will likely continue and possibly increase in the next decade. Though not a cause of chronic liver disease, adults who develop Hepatitis A can be extremely ill and lose significant school or work time during the course of an infection. The Hepatitis A vaccine is very safe and is given as a two-shot series, six months apart. It is essential for anyone planning to travel to developing countries, but may be a good investment in your health even in the U.S.

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### **Influenza**

Yearly flu shots (early October to mid December) are recommended for everyone, but are especially indicated for anyone with asthma, chronic heart or lung disease, diabetes, or other health problems that compromise the ability to fight infections. The Thagard Student Health Centers provides influenza vaccines, often free to students as budget permits, but supplies are limited.

### **Pneumococcal Vaccine**

The pneumococcal vaccine, often misquoted as the "pneumonia vaccine," is recommended for students at risk for serious pneumococcal infections (those with asthma, diabetes, chronic heart or lung disease, weakened immune systems, etc.) This vaccine reduces the incidence of the most common cause of community acquired bacterial pneumonia, called pneumococcal pneumonia. Check with your family physician to see if you are a candidate.

### **HPV Vaccine**

Currently 2 vaccines against Human Papilloma Virus are available which can protect against the development of cervical cancer and some types of venereal warts, HPV4 (Gardasil) and HPV2 (Cervarix). Highly recommended for females before they become sexually active, one of the vaccines, Gardasil, is also now approved for males as well. Most often given between ages 9 to 12, many patients, especially males, may wish to initiate this vaccine or complete the series before coming to FSU or after they arrive.