



**#hERHealth a social awareness initiative of NOGS & team 23-24**

## **Vaccination in Adolescence**



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Adolescent vaccination aims to boost immunity & keep our adolescents healthy & disease free. Immunizations are one of the most important, beneficial & cost effective disease prevention measures for adolescent health.

WHO defines adolescence age between 10 to 19 years. In India, there are 243 million adolescents which constitute 21 percent of the total population.

Following are the most important vaccinations required for adolescents.

**Tdap:** The common vaccination is Tdap which is used for protection against diphtheria, tetanus & pertussis. It can be given at the age of 16 years.

**HPV:** Another vaccine which needs to be given is HPV which is the Human papillomavirus vaccine. This vaccine protects against the human papillomavirus which causes cervical cancer in women & penile cancer in men. This virus also causes different forms of oral cancers & genital warts & other forms of cancer too.

**MMR:** The other common vaccination which has to be given is Measles, Mumps & rubella vaccine. MMR Vaccination has got two doses & is required to protect against measles, mumps & rubella diseases. The purpose of giving MMR vaccination to adolescents is to prevent congenital rubella syndrome which may occur if the woman is infected with rubella during pregnancy, then in that case the unborn baby can get congenital rubella syndrome which is associated with small brain size, mental retardation, vision problems & other birth defects. Two doses of MMR need to be given at an interval of 6 months.

**Hepatitis A:** It is another vaccine which has to be given to the adolescent group. Adolescents love to hang out with their friends & also eat out, hence the chances of getting jaundice are very high so the hepatitis A vaccine has to be given to protect from jaundice. Like the MMR, Hepatitis A also has to be given twice at an interval of six months.

**Typhoid vaccine:** Typhoid is another disease which is also quite common among adolescents & this occurs mostly because of eating out & eating unhealthy street food so the typhoid vaccine will protect against typhoid infection.

**Varicella vaccine:** Chicken pox may occur in teenagers & is quite virulent & has strong complications. In order to protect from chickenpox, it is necessary to give the varicella vaccine as the childhood vaccination which was given tends to wane off after the

primary vaccination, hence during the teenage years, the varicella vaccine has to be given.

**Meningococcal Vaccine:** some schools & college also asks for certain vaccinations. Those students travelling abroad for further education have to take vaccinations required in the country they are going. This vaccine is given to students travelling abroad to USA & Europe for further education & is used to protect against meningococcal infection as it may cause a widespread outbreak on campuses.

Not getting a full course of vaccine leaves a person unprotected & still at risk of getting a disease. Other vaccinations require a booster shot every few years to ensure that the level of immunity remains high.

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