



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

October 27, 2021

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ODH Emphasizes Importance of Childhood Vaccinations and Well-Child Visits

Data shows Well-Child visits declined between 2019 and 2020.

COLUMBUS – The Ohio Department of Health (ODH) is encouraging all parents of children from birth to age 18 to set up a well-child appointment with their child’s pediatrician or healthcare provider and ensure their child is up-to-date on recommended vaccinations.

[Data from the Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services \(CMS\)](#) shows well-child visits decreased across the country from 2019 to 2020. Due to decreasing preventative health visits during COVID-19 pandemic, some children are also behind on their recommended vaccinations. All children should be vaccinated to prevent the spread of serious illnesses such as against infectious diseases like tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough.

“Vaccines have protected us for years, like those preventing polio, measles, and mumps,” said Ohio Department of Health Director Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA. “Before vaccines, diseases like these were common, and caused great suffering and deaths every year. When enough people are vaccinated, it can greatly decrease the spread of dangerous diseases from child to child.”

- **Vaccines save lives.** Vaccine-preventable diseases can cause long-term illness, hospitalization, and even death. Skipping vaccines can leave your child and family vulnerable to illnesses such as influenza (flu), measles, mumps, and rubella.
- **Well child visits are essential.** Regular visits with your child’s pediatrician or healthcare provider ensure they are healthy and prepared for their future and allow early detection of potential health concerns.
- **Vaccination is very safe and effective.** Vaccines are only given to people after a long and careful review by scientists, doctors and healthcare professionals. Vaccines have safely protected us for years, including against diseases like polio. Before vaccines, polio caused great suffering and death, and is now largely non-existent thanks to widespread vaccination.
- **You can reduce the chance of spreading disease.** Many vaccine-preventable diseases are contagious, like flu, pertussis (whooping cough), and meningitis. Ensuring a child receives their recommended vaccinations can reduce the risk that they get sick and spread disease to others. Some people may not be able to get certain vaccines based on age, health conditions, or other factors even though they are vulnerable to illness. When a child is vaccinated, it helps protect those around them.
- **Protect your health when you travel.** If you are traveling outside the U.S., you may be exposed to diseases that are rare in the U.S. Some vaccines may also be required for you to travel to certain places. Getting vaccinated will help keep you safe and healthy while you’re traveling, and help make sure that you don’t bring any serious diseases home that could spread to your family, friends, and community.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has a recommended vaccination schedule for children from birth to age 18 available at <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html>.

ODH is currently running a childhood vaccination campaign with public service announcements running statewide. This video, *This Boo Boo* can be viewed at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fnCgmSvgyzY>. While we continue to fight COVID-19, all childhood vaccinations are more important than ever. Parents and guardians are encouraged to talk to their child's healthcare provider to ensure that they are up-to-date on their vaccinations.



Department
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Mike DeWine, Governor
Jon Husted, Lt. Governor

Bruce Vanderhoff, MD, MBA, Director

In addition, all Ohioans ages 12 and older are currently eligible to be vaccinated against COVID-19. Ohioans can schedule appointments by visiting gettheshot.coronavirus.ohio.gov or by calling 1-833-4-ASK-ODH (1-833-427-5634). Walk-in appointments are available at many providers statewide. Anyone with questions regarding COVID-19 vaccination within the state of Ohio can learn more at coronavirus.ohio.gov/vaccine.

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About the Ohio Department of Health

The Ohio Department of Health's mission is advancing the health and well-being of all Ohioans by transforming the state's public health system through unique partnerships and funding streams; addressing the community conditions and inequities that lead to disparities in health outcomes; and implementing data-driven, evidence-based solutions.