

Learn About Diseases That Can Affect Your Preteen

As a loving parent, you can't help but worry at times about your child's health. Although you can't protect her or him from every illness, you can take steps to help avoid some potentially serious diseases.

Check with your doctor or healthcare professional to see what you can do to help protect your child against these diseases.

Chickenpox (Varicella) is easily spread from person to person through coughing and sneezing. It causes a blister-like rash on the body. May sometimes lead to skin infections, swelling of the brain, and pneumonia.¹

Diphtheria is caused by a germ that may affect the breathing system. Symptoms may include sore throat and fever. May sometimes lead to difficulty breathing and coma.¹

Hepatitis A is a liver disease caused by the hepatitis A virus (HAV). It's usually caused by putting objects contaminated with hepatitis A virus in the mouth or by having infected food or water. Symptoms may include yellow skin or eyes, tiredness, stomachache, loss of appetite, or nausea.¹

Hepatitis B is an illness that affects the liver. It is spread through infected blood and other body fluids. Symptoms may include yellow skin or eyes, tiredness, stomachache, loss of appetite, nausea, or joint pain. May sometimes lead to ongoing liver illness, including liver cancer.¹

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) is a common virus. Most types of HPV are harmless, like the ones that cause common warts on the hands and feet. For most people, the body's own defense system will clear the virus. However, certain types of HPV may sometimes cause cervical cancer and abnormal cervical cells. Other types may sometimes cause genital warts. HPV often has no signs or symptoms.²

Measles is caused by a virus. Symptoms may include rash, high fever, coughing, runny nose, and watery eyes. May sometimes lead to ear infections, pneumonia, swelling of the brain, and seizures.¹

Meningococcal Disease is caused by a germ that can be spread from person to person by close contact. Symptoms may include fever, rash, headache, or stiff neck. May sometimes lead to shock and inflammation around the brain.³

Mumps is a virus that mainly affects the glands near the jaw. Symptoms may include fever, headache, muscle ache, and swelling around the jaw. May sometimes lead to inflammation around the brain, pancreas, testicles or ovaries, and hearing loss.¹

Pertussis (Whooping Cough) is a bacterial infection that causes violent coughing and difficulty breathing. Coughing may be so violent that it leads to difficulty eating or drinking. May sometimes lead to pneumonia, swelling of the brain, and occasionally, death.¹

Rubella (German Measles) is a virus that causes rash and fever. It is spread by coughing and sneezing. Especially a concern for pregnant women.¹

Tetanus (Lockjaw) is a disease of the nervous system caused by a germ. Tetanus enters the body through a cut or wound. Symptoms are painful muscle spasms, lockjaw, and difficulty swallowing. May sometimes lead to death.¹

References:

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Vaccine-preventable childhood diseases. Available at: www.cdc.gov/nip/diseases/child-vpd.htm
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Genital HPV infection fact sheet. Available at: www.cdc.gov/std/HPV/STDFact-HPV.htm
3. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Meningococcal disease. Available at: www.cdc.gov/ncidod/dbmd/diseaseinfo/meningococcal_g.htm