



Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health

MEDIA RELEASE

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Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health reminds parents of new school immunization requirement

(Mason City) — The Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health reminds parents a new immunization requirement will be in effect next school year for all students enrolling in 7th and 12th grades. The change requires a one-time dose of meningococcal (A, C, W, Y) vaccine received on or after 10 years of age for students in grades 7 and above, if born after September 15, 2004; and two doses of meningococcal (A, C, W, Y) vaccines with 1 dose received on or after 16 years of age for students in grade 12, if born after September 15, 1999; or one dose if received when students are 16 years-of-age or older. This requirement is effective for the 2017-2018 school year and, parents should plan now.

“Meningococcal disease is a very serious, life-threatening illness,” said Bethany Bjorklund, Immunization Nurse for the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health. “This vaccine protects against four strains, or ‘serogroups’ of meningitis, and is 85 to 100 percent effective at preventing infection.” According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 10 to 15 percent of people with meningococcal disease die, even with appropriate treatment. Of those who recover, up to 20 percent have serious after-effects like permanent hearing loss, limb loss, or brain damage.

“This new school immunization requirement is important because the bacteria that cause meningococcal disease are spread through upper respiratory droplets like saliva. Teens and young adults are at increased risk for meningococcal disease, and meningococcal vaccine is the best protection” said Bjorklund. As with all vaccinations, this immunization not only protects the individual, but also their friends and those around them.

For more information on the new meningitis vaccine requirement and for other school vaccine information, visit <http://www.idph.iowa.gov/immmtb/immunization/laws>. If you have questions about immunizations, contact Bethany at the Cerro Gordo County Department of Public Health at 641-421-9320 or www.cghealth.com.

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