



Press Release

July 30, 2010

Time for Back-to-School Immunizations

Galveston County and Cities –The new school year finds many parents busy shopping for uniforms, school supplies and other activities. The Galveston County Health District reminds parents that in addition to supplies Texas law requires students in Texas schools to be immunized against certain vaccine-preventable diseases. Each year in August the importance of back-to-school immunizations is emphasized as part of National Immunization Awareness Month.

Dr. Mark Guidry, Galveston County Health Authority, says “Vaccines are an important part of public health. Every year, our immunization clinics see hundreds of parents and children seeking to meet school-entry vaccination requirements. The back-to-school rush is our largest immunization effort each year. While we are glad to see children receiving required immunizations we remind parents the best protection is having their children immunized on time and by doing so they can avoid the long lines during the back-to-school rush.”

The Health District operates several immunization clinics but they are not all large enough to accommodate the increased numbers seeking services during the back to school rush. Due to space limitations immunization clinics in Dickinson and Texas City will be relocated to Mall of the Mainland in Texas City for the annual *Kids Health Fest*, August 5th through the 25th to better accommodate the crowd and related activities. All Health District immunization clinics will be closed August 4th to allow staff time to prepare and set up *Kids Health Fest*.

Vaccinations will be given at Mall of the Mainland: Tuesdays, Thursdays and Fridays 9 a.m. until 4 p.m.; Wednesdays 10 a.m. until 6 p.m.; and Saturdays 10 a.m. until 4 p.m.

A second location where immunizations may be obtained is the Galveston Immunization Clinic in the Island Community Center at 4700 Broadway which will

be open on: Mondays, 8 a.m. until 11:30 and 1 p.m. until 4:30 p.m.; and Wednesdays, 10 a.m. until 2 p.m. and 3 p.m. until 7 p.m.

Parents are asked to bring their child's immunization record with them. Some children may already be in the electronic immunization registry, known as ImmTrac. For those children all a parent needs to provide is the child's name and date of birth to verify needed immunizations. If there is no record for a child, parents will be given the opportunity to enroll their child in ImmTrac which make their child's immunization records electronically available in frequent circumstances when parents do not have a paper immunization record available.

At various times during the event kids may find a variety of things to occupy their time while waiting like visiting fire trucks, ambulances and animals from the Galveston County Joe Vickery Animal Shelter.

For the first time college freshmen and students in Texas also need to make sure their immunization records are up to date. A state law which went into effect on January 1 requires first-time students of public or private institutions of higher education who plan to live in on-campus dormitories or other on-campus housing facilities to show evidence of vaccination against bacterial meningitis.

The Galveston County Health District includes both childhood and adult immunizations in its strategic health plan which is a tool guiding their activities through 2015.

For more information on Galveston County Health District immunization activities or to volunteer time or needed incentives such as children's stickers, books, tokens or entertainment, call (409) 938-2244 or visit www.gchd.org.

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