



NEWS RELEASE



For Immediate Release

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(6/4/24) – Southern 7 Scheduling Back-to-School Shots

Each year local health departments and pediatricians experience an increase in back-to-school shots in the last few weeks leading up to the school year. While it's good that children are being vaccinated, this often results in scheduling conflicts, longer wait times in the clinic office, and the possibility of vaccine shortage.

Southern 7 Health Department (S7HD) is encouraging families to schedule their child's routine back-to-school vaccination appointments now to avoid the last minute rush in August. Scheduling your child's appointment early gives you plenty of time to collect necessary paperwork, confirm what vaccines are needed, and helps to ensure there are no delays at the vaccine appointment.

"Vaccinations are the primary reason we don't see higher rates of childhood diseases such as hepatitis, mumps, chickenpox, and many others, but these diseases are still around us," said Shawna Rhine, S7HD Community Outreach Coordinator. "While Illinois has experienced an increase in the number of measles cases in recent months, it's because of vaccinations that case numbers remain low and children are staying healthy."

The Centers for Disease Control & Prevention and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend every child receive routine vaccinations to prevent the spread of diseases and life-long health complications caused by those diseases. While Human Papillomavirus (HPV), flu and COVID-19 shots are not required for students in Illinois, families should consider these vaccines as well. HPV is a preventative against cervical, genital and other cancers.

Parents and guardians can contact their local health department or pediatrician to learn what vaccines are needed and when, and to schedule an appointment. Flu and COVID-19 can also be given for all children over age 6 months.

On-time vaccination throughout childhood is essential because it helps provide immunity before children are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases. Vaccines are tested to ensure that they are safe and effective for children to receive at the recommended ages. For more information or to schedule your child's vaccination appointment through Southern 7 Health Department call 618-634-2297, visit southern7.org, or download the Southern 7 app.

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