

Ohio AAP Reminds Parents of Meningococcal Disease Vaccine Requirement and Launches New Immunizations App Resource

Columbus, OHIO – With back-to-school time quickly approaching, The Ohio Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (Ohio AAP) would like to remind parents of the new meningococcal vaccine requirement that begins with the 2016-2017 school year, and share resources that can help parents stay up-to-date on important vaccine information. Last July, state lawmakers passed Senate Bill 121, requiring all Ohio students entering the 7th and 12th grade to be vaccinated against meningococcal disease.

“Immunization is the most effective way to protect yourself and your family from vaccine -preventable diseases,” said Dr. Mary DiOrio, Medical Director for the Ohio Department of Health (ODH). “These new requirements will help protect the most vulnerable population of young people from contracting this disease.”

Meningococcal disease can include infections of the lining of the brain and spinal cord (meningitis) and bloodstream infections (bacteremia or septicemia), both of which are very serious and can be fatal. In fatal cases, deaths can occur in as little as a few hours so it’s important that treatment begin right away. 10 to 15 out of 100 people infected with meningococcal disease will die, even with treatment. Additionally, 11 to 19 out of every 100 survivors will have long-term disabilities, such as loss of limb(s), deafness, nervous system problems, or brain damage.

To help parents stay informed with accurate immunization information, the Ohio AAP, in conjunction with ODH has launched the Fast Vax Facts app. Available in the Apple Store and Google Play, the app includes valuable, pediatrician-approved resources for parents and guardians. Information found on the app includes:

- A series of short videos recorded by a pediatrician on targeted topics that address the most common immunization questions and concerns.
- An interactive immunization schedule customized by child’s age
- Trusted answers to frequently asked questions
- Breaking news alerts on outbreaks, new research and other important immunization headlines
- Pediatrician-approved links and resources
- The ability to share reliable facts and resources with friends and family at the push of a button

“The first step in keeping our children safe is to be properly informed. Knowing the importance of vaccinations and following the recommended immunization schedule is critical,” said William Long, MD. “The Fast Vax Facts app is a great tool to help both parents and healthcare providers stay informed and manage their child’s health.”

While the app is available today, the Ohio AAP and ODH will be holding a press conference introducing the app to the public on Wednesday, August 3, 2016 at 10:30 a.m. in the Statehouse Ladies’ Gallery.

The Fast VAX Facts app is reviewed monthly for content accuracy and updated as new information on immunizations become available. For more information on this resource, visit www.ohioaap.org, or download the app on the Apple App Store or Google Play.

The Ohio Chapter of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Ohio AAP) promotes the health, safety and well-being of children and adolescents so they may reach their full potential. The Ohio AAP works to accomplish this by addressing the needs of children, their families, and their communities, and by supporting Chapter members through advocacy, education, research, and improving the systems through which they deliver pediatric care.

###

MEDIA CONTACT: Melanie Farkas, 614-846-6258, mfarkas@ohioaap.org