

## **HEALTH SERVICES**

Health Services collaborates with other District departments to provide a comprehensive school health program. The primary goal of Health Services and the school nurses is to help all students reach their maximum potential by keeping students healthy and ready to learn. Health education, illness and injury prevention, early detection and treatment of illness, and quality skilled intervention for acute and chronic health needs are provided by the nursing staff. The services offered by Health Services are not intended to be substitutes for a student's regular medical care. Our services are designed to encourage parents/guardians to be aware of their student's health status, inform them of health concerns or needs, and encourage them to use the services of their physician, dentist, and community health agencies. Health Services follows the policies, requirements, and regulations established by the Texas Education Agency, the Texas Department of State Health Services, the Texas Board of Nursing, and NEISD.

## **CLINIC**

The school clinic is used for emergencies and student health care. Students who are too ill to attend classes will be sent home. **Students may not leave school until they have been cleared with the attendance office.** The following standard first aid over-the-counter medications/products have been approved by the Medical Advisory Committee:

- Bacitracin
- Bactine
- Mouth wash
- Bausch & Lomb Sensitive Eyes Plus saline solution
- Vaseline/Petroleum jelly
- Anbesol
- Sterile isotonic eye wash solution
- Hydrocortisone cream
- Sting Kill
- Isopropyl alcohol

Contact your school nurse by phone, email or in writing if you object to the use of any of the above products on your student.

\*\*\*Cough Drops, lozenges, and throat relief products require a physician's order, and monitoring by the school nurse. They have the potential to be a choking hazard for some students.

## **THE SCHOOL NURSE (RN)**

Each school has a full-time registered nurse (RN) who is responsible for the school health program and services provided for the students. The RN is available for conferences with parents/guardians, teachers, and physicians to promote and ensure the health and safety of all students. If parents/guardians wish to discuss their student's health or have questions concerning a health program, please call the school nurse or Health Services at (210) 356-9244.

## **THE LICENSED VOCATIONAL NURSE (LVN)**

The LVN is assigned to provide clerical support, computer data entry and basic health care to students under the supervision of the RN and as directed and assigned by Health Services. The LVN will assist with monitoring of health status and provision of nursing care to regular education students, special needs students and students in the Special Education Program. The LVN will assist the Special Education RN as needed. The LVN will perform screenings in compliance with state mandates.

## **THE CLINIC ASSISTANT (CA)**

The clinic assistant (CA) is assigned to help the school nurse in the care of the students and works under the supervision of the RN. The CA will assist the RN and LVN with clerical support, computer data entry and basic first aid to students under the supervision of the RN. The clinic assistant is trained in diabetic management care and emergency care of students with seizure disorder, anaphylaxis, and asthma.

## **THE ASTHMA EDUCATOR**

Diane Rhodes, BBA, RRT, AE-C, RCP may be reached at (210) 356-9247 or [drhode@neisd.net](mailto:drhode@neisd.net).

## **THE ASTHMA EDUCATION PROGRAM**

The Asthma Awareness Education Program consists of four (4) components that represent a comprehensive approach to asthma control. These include the following: (1) Awareness (2) Medication (3) Environment and (4) Education. This proactive multi-faceted approach addresses the most common childhood health condition; approximately 8,000 NEISD students have asthma (8% of District's school aged population). Asthma is the #1 chronic cause of school absenteeism.

Providing an asthma-friendly environment includes educating staff, students, and parents/guardians regarding asthma awareness and asthma classroom triggers; and providing disease management education and strategies for students and their families. Program goals for students with asthma are to improve attendance, decrease interruption of classroom instruction due to symptoms, and to facilitate full participation in physical activity without restrictions/limitations.

Our commitment to healthy classroom indoor air and asthma management results in higher student/staff productivity and attendance. This benefits the District with lower healthcare costs, increased student performance and increased state funding.

Improving **Indoor Air Quality (IAQ)** can impact the comfort and health of all students and staff which, in turn, can improve concentration, attendance, and student performance. The quality of indoor air is a significant concern because when the hours spent learning, working in offices or at school are added up, people on average spend the vast majority of their time indoors where they could be exposed to indoor air pollutants. By providing an indoor environment that is healthy for our most sensitive individuals we can achieve an environment that is healthy for everyone. Healthier children learn better. Healthier employees work better.

The District strives toward a SCENT FREE ZONE to keep the air we share healthy and fragrance-free. The chemicals/aroma used in scented products can make some individuals ill, especially those with fragrance sensitivities, asthma, allergies and other medical conditions. Use of perfumes, fragrances, scented lotions, etc. can lead to an accumulation of harmful irritants that can affect students/staff. Good personal hygiene is important; while at school students should use unscented solid or roll-on deodorant; no aerosols that become airborne.

Protect indoor air quality by avoiding the use of heavy perfumes, colognes, oils, scented lotions, scented creams, or scented moisturizers. **What do we mean by "heavy" or "strong" fragrance?** If it can be smelled beyond a normal personal distance of two feet, it is too strong. Acceptable fragrances are ones that are barely noticeable and are not noticed by others beyond the wearer's personal space.

Additionally, we ask parents to please refrain from providing fragranced items for classroom use. This includes, but is not limited to, aerosols, sprays, liquids/gels, oils, diffusers, plug-ins, potpourri, or anything that emits a fragrance into the air, etc.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS

**State law and NEISD policy require medically validated up-to-date immunizations records to be on file for all students.** All students are required to be fully vaccinated against specific diseases. **STUDENTS WITH IMMUNIZATION RECORDS THAT ARE NOT AS UP-TO-DATE AS MEDICALLY FEASIBLE WILL BE SUBJECT TO EXCLUSION FROM SCHOOL.** However, students may be provisionally enrolled if they have begun the required immunizations and these records are AS UP TO DATE AS MEDICALLY FEASIBLE and students continue to receive the necessary immunizations as rapidly as medically feasible. Instate transfer students, dependents of active duty United States military personnel and homeless students as defined by the McKinney-Vento Act have 30 days from the date of enrollment to produce the required documentation. Upon receipt of immunization records, if immunizations are not as up-to-date as medically feasible, students will be excluded until required doses are received.

To claim exclusions for medical reasons or Reasons of Conscience, including a religious belief, please contact the school nurse or NEISD Health Services at (210) 356-9244.

## IMMUNIZATION REQUIREMENTS 2017-2018

### At the end of Sixth Grade

5 Doses	D'TaP, D'TP, D'T, Td (Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis) 5 <sup>th</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> 4 doses with 4 <sup>th</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday <u>Students who are 7 years of age or older:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 3 doses Tetanus-Diphtheria containing vaccine, one of which must have been received on or after the 4<sup>th</sup> birthday</li><li>• Pertussis vaccine is not required.</li></ul>
4 Doses	IPV (Polio) 4 <sup>th</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> 3 doses with 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday
2 Doses	Measles (1 <sup>st</sup> dose on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday)

1 Dose	Mumps on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday
1 Dose	Rubella on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday
3 Doses	Hepatitis B. For students aged 11-15 years, 2 doses meet the requirements if adult hepatitis B vaccine (Recombivax) was received. Dosage and type of vaccine must be clearly documented. (Two 10 mcg/1.0 ml of Recombivax).
2 Doses	Varicella (chickenpox) with first dose on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> statement/date of chickenpox illness.
2 Doses	Hepatitis A with 1 <sup>st</sup> dose on or after the first birthday.

### **Seventh and Eighth Grade**

3 Doses	DTP, DTaP, DT, Td, TDaP (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) 1 dose must be on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday
1 Dose	TDaP/Td booster within the last 5 years for 7 <sup>th</sup> graders. (Required if it has been 10 years or more since last tetanus-containing vaccine)
4 Doses	IPV (Polio) 4 <sup>th</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> 3 doses with 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday
2 Doses	Measles (1 <sup>st</sup> dose on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday)
1 Dose	Mumps on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday
1 Dose	Rubella on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday
3 Doses	Hepatitis B (If Recombivax was received, 2 doses meet the requirement).
2 Doses	Varicella (chickenpox). First dose must have been given on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> statement with date of chickenpox illness.
1 Dose	Meningococcal
2 Doses	Hepatitis A with first dose on or after the 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday

### **Ninth through Twelfth Grade**

	DTP, DTaP, DT, Td, TDaP (tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis) 1 dose must be on or after the 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday
1 Dose	TDaP/TD booster within the last 5 years for 7 <sup>th</sup> graders. (Required if it has been 10 years or more since last tetanus-containing vaccine)
4 Doses	IVP(Polio) 4 <sup>th</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> 3 doses with 3 <sup>rd</sup> dose on or after 4 <sup>th</sup> birthday.
2 Doses	Measles 1 <sup>st</sup> dose on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday
1 Dose	Mumps on or after the 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday
1 Dose	Rubella on or after the 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday
3 Doses	Hepatitis B (If Recombivax was received, 2 doses meet the requirement)
2 Doses	Varicella (Chickenpox) First dose must have been given on or after 1 <sup>st</sup> birthday <u>OR</u> statement with date of chickenpox illness
1 Dose	Meningococcal

### **ALL IMMUNIZATIONS MUST HAVE MEDICAL VERIFICATION.**

Receipt of all doses up to 4 days before the student's birthday will satisfy requirements for ALL vaccines.

### **ILLNESS/COMMUNICABLE DISEASES**

Students are expected to be free of fever (temperature less than 100° F) and free of communicable diseases in order to attend school. Parents/Guardians are required to pick up their child as soon as possible if they develop a fever (temperature greater than 99.9° F) at school. Parents/Guardians are encouraged to keep their students home until they are fever-free for 24 hours without anti-fever medication. This helps minimize the spread of potentially contagious illnesses at school and encourages adequate rest and recuperation before students return to school.

If students are sent home with fever and return to school the next day, they may remain at school as long as they are free of fever and symptoms of illness. If students are sent home with fever and return to school the following day but develop fever and/or symptoms of illness during the day, **students are to be excluded from attendance for the remainder of that day and the following day**, and must be fever free for 24 hours without anti-fever medication prior to returning to school. Anti-fever medication cannot be given to students to keep them in school.

Parents/Guardians are also required to pick up their students as soon as possible if they exhibit symptoms of communicable conditions, such as, but not limited to, pinkeye or live head lice. Students exhibiting symptoms of a communicable condition are to be excluded from school until proper treatment has been administered and the condition has improved. **Under all circumstances, the judgment of the school nurse prevails.** A physician's statement may be required before students are allowed to return to school.

## **HEALTH CONCERNS**

If students have a health concern requiring medication during the school day, a **Medication Administration Request (MAR)** form must be completed by the prescribing Texas licensed physician. Students who require procedures/treatments during the school day are required to submit the Physician/Parent Request for Administration of Procedures/Treatments form. Questions or concerns contact Health Services (210) 356-9244.

These forms also provide important information for the school nurse regarding emergency care and special precautions. The MAR and the Physician/Parent Request for Administration of Procedures/Treatments forms must be completed annually and whenever there is a change of medication, dose, procedure, and/or treatment. These forms are available from the school nurse and on the NEISD website at <http://www.neisd.net/Page/943> (Parents-Health Services). The school nurse will contact the physician as necessary for information regarding student health concerns, medication, and procedures/treatments. Health concerns and related information will then be shared on an as-needed basis with appropriate school staff to provide appropriate care and safety for the students. All Health Services written physician orders expire after 12 full months.

## **POSSESSION AND SELF-MANAGEMENT OF EMERGENCY MEDICATION**

Students meeting requirements established in the Texas Education Code Chapter 38 Health & Safety section 38.015: are permitted to possess their prescription asthma and/or anaphylaxis auto-injectable medication with the completion of required forms submitted to the school nurse annually. Both the parent and the prescribing physician must sign forms. Students who meet the requirements and carry their prescribed asthma/anaphylaxis medicine (with proper pharmacy label) are responsible for the medicine and will be subject to disciplinary consequences for any violation of law, District Policy, or the Student Code of Conduct.

## **MANAGEMENT OF DIABETES**

A Diabetes Management and Treatment Plan developed by the physician and parent/guardian is required for students with diabetes who need treatment or care at school or at a school-related function (Texas Health and Safety Code, Chapter 168). Students who meet the written requirements will be permitted to self-carry and use their diabetes monitoring supplies and required medication at school or at a school-related function. Additional information and required forms are available from the school nurse. Students who meet the requirements and possess/use treatment supplies and equipment for diabetes medications are responsible for their supplies and medication and will be subject to disciplinary consequences for any violation of law, District Policy, and the Student Code of Conduct.

## **MANAGEMENT OF SEVERE LIFE-THREATENING FOOD ALLERGY**

Any student with a parent reported or physician documented severe food allergy must have a current written physician's order/severe allergy action plan on file with the school nurse. NEISD, in compliance with SB 27, 82 Legislative Session, has a comprehensive food allergy management plan in place. Key elements of the plan include the following: identification of students with food allergies at risk for anaphylaxis; development/implementation/monitoring of Individual Health Care Plan (IHCP) and/or Emergency Care Plan (ECP); reducing risk of exposure within school setting; training for school staff for recognition of anaphylaxis and appropriate emergency response; and post anaphylaxis reaction review of policy and procedures. Please contact Health Services @ (210) 356-9244 or call your student's school nurse. Parent resource: <https://www.foodallergy.org>.

## **HEALTH INFORMATION FORM**

Each student is required to have current health information accessible to the school nurse. For initial enrollment, the Health Information Form may be completed electronically during online registration and updated annually or as needed in hard-copy format.

## **USE OF CRUTCHES/WHEELCHAIRS/ASSISTIVE DEVICES PROCEDURE**

If your student has had surgery or has been injured and is required to use a wheelchair, crutches, neck brace, or any other assistive device while at school, the following procedure must be followed in order to provide reasonable accommodations during the school activities or emergency events.

1. A physician's statement regarding the specific limitations and duration of their use is required before a student will be allowed to use a wheelchair, crutches, or any other assistive device during school activities or events.
2. Another student will be assigned to assist carrying your student's books, and an adult employee will push the wheelchair if a student is unable to do so pursuant to a physician's orders.
3. Both students will be dismissed from class five minutes earlier to facilitate getting to the bus on time at the end of the day.
4. The school district is not responsible for any injury that occurs as a result of the use of wheelchairs, crutches, or other assistive devices.
5. The student will be subject to disciplinary consequences for any violation of law, District Policy, and the Student Code of Conduct if found misusing any of these devices.
6. The campus wheelchair is only for emergency purposes and not intended for student daily use.
7. Parents/Guardians are responsible for obtaining wheelchairs, crutches, and other assistive devices prescribed by their physician.
8. All devices require proper fitting and training by the prescribing provider for appropriate use while at school.

## **POSSESSION OF WATER BOTTLE DURING THE SCHOOL DAY**

Unless authorized in writing by a physician, allowing students to carry water bottles for hydration during the school days is a campus-based decision. Please consult your student's campus administration.

## **STUDENTS WILL NOT BE RELEASED TO ANY PERSON WHO IS NOT LISTED AS AN ALTERNATE ADULT AND/OR EMERGENCY CONTACT.**

## **EMERGENCY CARE**

If students are hurt or become seriously ill at school and the parents/guardians cannot be reached by telephone, they will be transported by EMS to an emergency room and the parents/guardians will be held responsible for all expenses. The NEISD shall not be responsible for costs of treating injuries or assume liability for any costs associated with an injury at school or at any school-related function. See Student Insurance in this handbook.

## **MEDICATION**

**Parents/Guardians** must provide all medications for administration during hours of instruction. The school does not provide any over-the-counter products with the exception of first aid products approved by the NEISD Medical Advisory Committee (see CLINIC section for list of products).

**ALL** medications shall be delivered and kept in the school clinic. Medications may not be kept in the classroom or administered by a teacher in the classroom. Students may not carry ANY type of medication (prescription, non-prescription, homeopathic products, vitamins, or over-the-counter health products) on their person, in their lunch box, purse, or book bag/backpack, on the school bus, or place these types of items in their locker. **There are severe disciplinary consequences, including suspension and assignment to an alternative education program or expulsion for possessing, carrying, distributing or placing over-the-counter and prescription medications in the places listed above.**

Medication will not be accepted without the required physician/parent authorization. All medication must be in the original prescription or over-the-counter container. Medication brought to the clinic in containers such as, but not limited to, plastic wrap or bags, foil, jars, paper towels, envelopes, etc. will **NOT** be administered.

Parents/Guardians must pick up any unused medication from the clinic when discontinued or at the end of the school year. Medication not picked up at the end of the school year by the parents/guardians will be destroyed.

**FOR THE SAFETY OF ALL STUDENTS, MEDICATIONS WILL NOT BE SENT HOME WITH STUDENTS AND STUDENTS MAY NOT BRING MEDICATION TO SCHOOL.**

**Prescription Medication:** Short-term prescription medication will only be administered according to the instructions on the prescription container for ten (10) school days or longer (e.g., 14 day antibiotic regimen) and must be accompanied by a written request from the parents/guardians. If necessary, when prescription is filled, ask the pharmacist for an extra labeled bottle for school use. If there are changes in the dose of medication or if a medication is discontinued, written notification from the parents/guardians and/or physician is required. Changes in the dose of medication require a new prescription label. The prescription label and physician's order must match at all times. All sample medications provided by a physician for school administration require written authorization from the physician and the parents/guardians.

Medications to be given daily all year, medications that must be given during certain emergency situations, and medications necessary for the management of chronic conditions must be accompanied by written authorization from the prescribing physician and parents/guardians and will be administered according to the instructions on the prescription container. Orders expire after 12 months (i.e. orders written on June 10, 2017 will expire on June 10, 2018).

Students meeting state and district requirements will be permitted to possess their prescription asthma/anaphylaxis medication and/or prescription medication, supplies, and equipment required for independent monitoring and treatment of diabetes with the completion of required forms submitted to the school nurse. All required paperwork must be submitted to the school nurse prior to students being allowed to possess their medication and supplies. The parent/guardian and the prescribing physician must sign all orders/forms.

Prescription narcotics will be addressed on a case by case basis.

Students attending a field trip or off-campus school-sponsored event will have their prescription medication sent with the student's trained and authorized District certified teacher, nurse or qualified trained parent volunteer (e.g., MD, RN, LVN, PA or Pharmacist) along with instructions on the administration of the medication.

**Non-Prescription Medication:** The administration of non-prescription medication is permitted only on a very limited basis and only with written permission from parents/guardians. Medications without a physician's order will be administered for ten (10) school days. A physician's order will be required thereafter.

With the exception of overnight field trips, non-prescription medication(s) are not provided by the District during day field trips, Fine Arts activities before and after high school instructional time (e.g., prior to 8:45 a.m. and after 4:05 p.m.) and/or off-campus, school sponsored events. Any such medications must be provided by the parent/guardian of the student, along with a written request, containing instructions on the administration of the non-prescription medication(s) to the student. For long-term use (e.g., greater than 10 school days) High School Fine Arts requires the "Medication Addendum" form. **All non-prescription medications must be FDA approved and in the original manufacturer's container.**

Parents/guardians are encouraged to apply insect repellent in the morning prior to their student coming to school. If your student needs insect repellent to be applied during the school day, the container must be labeled with the student's name and remain in the clinic. Containers will be released to parents/guardians only.

**Overnight Field Trips:** The Medication Addendum to Overnight Travel Consent/Health Form that is part of the Overnight Field Trip Policy/Protocol **does** allow for the administration of a limited number of stock non-prescription over-the-counter (OTC) medications with Parent/Guardian authorization.

The nurse will contact the physician concerning any questions regarding prescription/non-prescription medications. All medications administered by the nurse must be FDA approved. Other types of medications such as, but not limited to, homeopathic products, vitamins, herbs, dietary supplements, intravenous medications, and medications manufactured outside the United States **WILL NOT BE ADMINISTERED.**

NEISD wants students to understand that taking any kind of medication is a serious responsibility and that medication should only be taken under the direction of a physician and only when medically necessary. Please refer to Board Policy FFAC (LEGAL) and FFAC (LOCAL) for more information on medical treatment.

## **A STRONG MEDICATION POLICY IS A STRONG DRUG POLICY.**

### **SUNSCREEN**

In 2015 Senate Bill 265 passed and approved students to possess and apply topical sunscreen products while on school property or at a school-related event or activity to avoid overexposure to the sun. Sunscreen is not to be shared. Sunscreen is not to be used for any other purpose than application to exposed skin prior to outside activities. The sunscreen used on school property must be approved by the Federal Food and Drug Administration for over-the-counter use and a non-aerosol product.

### **SCHOOL HEALTH SCREENING PROGRAMS**

Students are screened according to the Texas State Board of Education Rules and the school health programs mandated by the Texas Department of State Health Services.

### **ACANTHOSIS NIGRICANS SCREENING**

All seventh grade students will be screened for a skin marker around the neck that potentially indicates high insulin levels in the body. High insulin levels create a potential risk for the future development of Type II Diabetes. Students who have the skin marker will also be weighed and measured, and have their blood pressure taken. The school nurse will contact and send a referral letter to the parents/guardians if medical evaluation is recommended.

### **VISION AND HEARING SCREENING**

All seventh grade, all new students entering school from out-of-state, and all students who are referred for special education evaluations will be screened by the school nurse for vision and hearing abnormalities. The school nurse will contact and send a referral letter to the parents/guardians if any abnormality is noted.

### **SPINAL SCREENING**

All eighth grade students will be screened for abnormal spinal curvatures. The school nurse will contact and send a referral letter to the parents/guardians if any abnormality is noted.

In each screening program, parents/guardians who receive a referral letter are asked to schedule an appointment with their physician/specialist. The referral letter should be completed and signed by the physician/specialist and returned to the school nurse. If assistance is needed from community agencies or other resources, please contact the school nurse.

Changes in these state mandates for spinal screenings are expected to be enacted prior to the 2017-2018 school year.

## **BACTERIAL MENINGITIS**

### **WHAT IS MENINGITIS?**

Meningitis is an infection of the fluid surrounding the brain and spinal cord. It is usually caused by viruses, bacteria, parasites, and fungi. Viral meningitis is the most common and least serious. Most people completely recover from viral meningitis. Parasitic and fungal meningitis are very rare. Bacterial meningitis is very serious and may involve complicated medical treatment.

### **WHAT ARE THE SYMPTOMS?**

Someone with meningitis will become very ill but not everyone with meningitis will have the same symptoms. The illness may develop over one or two days but it can also progress very rapidly in a matter of hours. Children (over one year old) and adults with meningitis may have a severe headache, high temperature, nausea, vomiting, sensitivity to bright lights, neck stiffness or joint pain, drowsiness, or confusion. In both children and adults, there may be a rash or tiny red-purple spots that can occur on any part of the body.

### **HOW IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS DIAGNOSED?**

The diagnosis of bacterial meningitis is based on a combination of clinical symptoms and the results of laboratory tests.

### **HOW SERIOUS IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS?**

Bacterial meningitis is a very serious disease. If it is diagnosed early and treated promptly, the majority of people make a complete recovery. Even with prompt treatment, some cases may result in permanent disabilities such as loss of hearing, loss of vision, mental retardation, paralysis, or limb amputations. Bacterial meningitis can also be fatal.



### **HOW IS BACTERIAL MENINGITIS SPREAD?**

Fortunately, none of the bacteria that cause meningitis are as contagious as diseases such as the common cold or flu. They are not spread by casual contact or by simply breathing the air where a person with meningitis has been. The germs that cause meningitis live naturally in the back of our noses and throats but they do not live for long outside the body. They are spread when people exchange saliva (such as by kissing, sharing drinking containers, eating utensils or cigarettes). The germ does not cause meningitis in most people. Instead, most people become carriers of the germ for days, weeks or even months. Being a carrier helps stimulate the body's natural defense system. The bacteria rarely overcome the body's immune system to cause meningitis or serious illnesses.

### **HOW CAN MENINGITIS BE PREVENTED?**

Bacterial meningitis can be prevented by limiting the number of people you kiss and by not sharing food, drinks, utensils, toothbrushes, or cigarettes.

Vaccines that help prevent meningitis are required for young children, if there is a meningitis outbreak in the community, and for people traveling to foreign countries where there is a high risk of getting the disease. A vaccine that can prevent meningitis in adolescents and young adults is state mandated for students in grades 7-12 and a second dose is required for all incoming college freshmen or college students between the ages of 19-21. Administer booster dose if most recent dose given was when student was younger than age 16. The vaccine is safe and effective (85%-90%). It can cause mild side effects such as redness and discomfort at the injection site lasting up to two days. Entering college freshmen ages 19-21 need a meningitis vaccine dose within the last 5 years.

### **WHAT YOU SHOULD DO IF YOU THINK YOU OR A FRIEND MIGHT HAVE BACTERIAL MENINGITIS?**

You should seek medical attention immediately.

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Your school nurse, family doctor, and the staff at your local or regional Texas Department of State Health Services office are excellent sources of information on all communicable diseases and vaccines. Additional information may also be found at the web sites for the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) and at the Texas Department of State Health Services: [www.dshs.texas.gov](http://www.dshs.texas.gov)