

To serve, protect, and promote a healthy community for all.



VACCINATION RATES ARE FALLING DURING COVID-19

New threats from old diseases, such as measles, whooping cough (Pertussis), and chicken pox, could return due to the dramatic drop in vaccination rates in Michigan during COVID-19.

- Less than 50% of children 2 years and younger are up to date on their immunizations.
- In Kent County, we have seen a 5% drop in vaccinations rates which equals about 5,000 kids.
- Our teen numbers are lower as well with only 54% up-to-date which means 25,000 teens are behind on their vaccines.

Why does this matter? Mary Wisinski, Immunizations Supervisor at the Kent County Health Department, explains that "as a community we need a certain level of immunity to prevent the vaccine-preventable diseases from making a come back. Unless we increase our immunization rates, this Fall season we could see an outbreak." For example, if measles vaccination coverage of 90% to 95% (the level needed to establish herd immunity) is not achieved, a measles outbreak can occur.

There are many reasons for the drop in the rates. Families staying home during the pandemic, limited appointments available for well-child visits and fears about vaccination safety during COVID-19. However, maintaining routine vaccinations is critical even during the pandemic. On time vaccinations protect individuals and communities and reduce the burden on the health care system. "We have the power to protect not only ourselves, but our entire community, when we vaccinate on time, every time" said Dr. Joneigh Khaldune, Chief Medical Executive for Michigan.

Vaccines are proven to protect people from serious diseases at every age.

Talk with your Health Care Provider to ensure you and your family are up-to-date on all recommended vaccines.

IT'S TIME TO GET YOUR FLU SHOT



The best protection from the seasonal flu virus is by getting an annual flu vaccine for yourself and your loved ones.

During COVID-19 it is even more important than ever to stay healthy and protect against preventable illnesses.

For more information, contact the Kent County Health Department at 616-632-7200.

Vaccines for Children Program (VFC)

The program provides vaccines AT NO COST to eligible children:

- Younger than 19 years old, AND
- The doctor is at a VFC Provider office, AND
- One of the following:
 - Medicaid-Eligible
 - Uninsured*
 - Under insured*
 - American Indian or Alaska Native

*an administrative fee is charged.



Click picture for the Interactive Vaccine Guide For Parents

