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HEALTH NOTES

Grade 7 Immunization Program

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Each year the Porcupine Health Unit offers Grade 7 students free hepatitis B and meningococcal vaccine through school-based clinics.

Hepatitis B germs are spread from person to person by blood and body fluids. Some people may remain infected all their lives and may not know they have this infection. The infection can be spread to others unknowingly, and can cause liver damage, liver cancer and sometimes death. Protection from this infection is provided by two doses of the Hepatitis B vaccine.

Meningitis is caused by germs that many people carry in their nose and throat without feeling sick. Occasionally, these germs infect the lining of the brain and cause widespread infection of the blood and body organs. Consequences can be severe and can lead to loss of limbs and hearing, kidney damage and death. Only one dose of Menactra vaccine is required for complete protection.

Further information and consent forms will be sent home in the Fall.

Sources:

1. Ontario Ministry of Health Hepatitis B and Meningococcal A,C,Y, W-135 Vaccine Fact Sheets
2. Your Child's Best Shot: A parent's guide to vaccination 3rd edition
3. Public Health Agency of Canada website
4. Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness and Promotion

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