

[COPY ONTO YOUR COLLEGE OR HEALTH SERVICE LETTERHEAD]

## **Sample Press Release – Hepatitis B**

### **HEALTH OFFICIALS RECOMMEND COLLEGE STUDENTS GET VACCINATED AGAINST HEPATITIS B**

[INSERT SUBHEAD OF AWARENESS ACTIVITIES AND NAME OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE HERE]

Health experts recommend college students get vaccinated against hepatitis B, a serious liver disease that infected an estimated 78,000 Americans in 2001, the majority of whom were adolescents and young adults.

The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommend vaccination of everyone 18 years of age and under, as well as other students at high risk for hepatitis B. The American College Health Association (ACHA) encourages immunization for all college students, and the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) urges all college athletes to be vaccinated.

Hepatitis B is spread when the blood or other body fluids (semen, vaginal fluids, and saliva) of a person with the virus are absorbed into an individual's blood stream, either through broken skin or a mucous membrane. It can be transmitted through sexual contact; contact sports; while helping someone who is injured; sharing razors, pierced earrings, or needles; getting a tattoo or body piercing; or while traveling to high-risk areas. Living in close quarters, like a college dormitory, may also increase the risk of exposure to carriers.

“About 30% of all people infected with hepatitis B — and therefore able to transmit it to others — don't know they're infected. We want to help students protect themselves with information and vaccination,” said [INSERT NAME, TITLE OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE DIRECTOR OR OTHER APPROPRIATE CAMPUS ADMINISTRATOR, NAME OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE, AND NAME OF COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY].

[INSERT NAME OF COLLEGE; EXPLAIN AWARENESS/VACCINATION PROGRAM — E.G., OFFERING VACCINE IN HEALTH CENTER, HOLDING ON-CAMPUS VACCINE CLINIC OR AWARENESS WEEK].

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Hepatitis B symptoms can resemble the flu and may include fever, loss of appetite, low energy, joint pain, cramping, nausea and vomiting, and jaundice (yellow skin or eyes).

The hepatitis B vaccine is 96 percent effective following a series of three shots over a six-month period. The most common side effect of the vaccine is soreness at the site of the injection. Vaccine recipients cannot get the disease from the vaccine.

Information about hepatitis B and vaccination is available at **[INSERT NAME OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE; CAN ALSO USE THIS SPACE TO INCLUDE WEBSITE ADDRESS, HOTLINE, ETC.]**

General information also is available at the websites of the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), and the American College Health Association, [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org).

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## **Sample Press Release – Varicella**

### **HEALTH OFFICIALS RECOMMEND VACCINATION FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WHO HAVE NEVER HAD CHICKENPOX**

**[INSERT SUBHEAD OF AWARENESS ACTIVITIES AND NAME OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE HERE]**

College students without a history of chickenpox or prior immunization against it are urged by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the American College Health Association (ACHA) to get vaccinated against the disease.

Chickenpox, or varicella, is a highly contagious childhood disease that can be severe in adults. About four million Americans develop chickenpox each year. Adults, including college students, are 10 times more likely to develop complications from the disease.

“College students and their parents should know that the complications from chickenpox increase with age. The disease can be very serious, even life-threatening,” said **[INSERT NAME, TITLE OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE DIRECTOR OR OTHER APPROPRIATE CAMPUS ADMINISTRATOR, NAME OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE, AND NAME OF COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY]**. “College students may also be more susceptible to the virus because it’s so contagious and spreads more easily in a college living environment.”

**[INSERT NAME OF COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY; EXPLAIN AWARENESS/VACCINATION PROGRAM — E.G., OFFERING VACCINE IN HEALTH CENTER, HOLDING ON-CAMPUS VACCINE CLINIC OR AWARENESS WEEK.]**

Chickenpox is usually mild in children but can be severe in adults and lead to severe skin infection, scars, pneumonia, brain damage, or death. Each year, nearly 11,000 people require hospitalization and 100 die due to complications. Chickenpox is spread from person to person through the air or by contact with fluid from chickenpox blisters. Almost everyone who has not had chickenpox will get the disease by adulthood.

The chickenpox vaccine is approximately 80-90 percent effective in preventing disease. The most common side effect is soreness at the injection site. People over the age of 13 should have two

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doses at least a month apart. Most people who get vaccinated will not get chickenpox; and if they do get chickenpox, it is usually very mild.

Information about varicella and vaccination is available at **[INSERT NAME OF COLLEGE HEALTH SERVICE; CAN ALSO USE THIS SPACE TO INCLUDE WEBSITE ADDRESS, HOTLINE, ETC.]** General information also is available at the web sites of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov), and the American College Health Association, [www.acha.org](http://www.acha.org).

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