



BlueCross BlueShield of Alabama

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Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Alabama Reports Low HPV Vaccination Rates Among Adolescents

Birmingham – While human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination rates have risen substantially, in 2016 only 34 percent of adolescents in Alabama received a first dose of the vaccine by their 13th birthday. This is according to a seven-year study of medical claims by the Blue Cross Blue Shield Association (BCBSA).

The report, “Adolescent Vaccination Rates in America,” is a comprehensive study of outpatient medical claims for commercially insured Blue Cross Blue Shield members born from 2000 through 2003 and who were vaccinated by their 13th birthday between 2010 and 2016.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), there are 31,500 deaths from cancers relating to the HPV virus each year in the United States. HPV- related cancers are the only cancers preventable through the HPV vaccination.

Alabama’s first-dose HPV vaccination rates increased 70 percent, rising from 20 percent for adolescents who turned 13 years old in 2013 to 34 percent for adolescents who turned 13 years old in 2016. Despite the growth, the HPV vaccination lags behind other adolescent vaccines in Alabama, where 69 percent of adolescents in 2016 received the meningococcal vaccine and 81 percent received the Tdap vaccine. Furthermore, only 8 percent of Alabama adolescents completed the recommended full three doses of the HPV vaccination by age 13 compared to 9 percent nationally.

In October 2016, the CDC changed the adolescent [HPV vaccination recommendation](#) from three to two doses starting the vaccine series before a child’s 15th birthday. Blue Cross is urging healthcare providers to recommend HPV vaccination to all of their eligible patients and to discuss its benefits with their patients and colleagues.

Below is a chart reflecting results from Alabama's major cities included in the study:

Alabama Adolescent Vaccination Rates Completion Year 2016						
MSA	HPV 1st dose	HPV –Girls 1 st dose	HPV –Boys 1 st dose	HPV 3 doses	Meningococcal	Tdap
Birmingham	33.0%	35.7%	30.3%	8.2%	78.0%	87.2%
Huntsville	24.2%	31.0%	17.8%	6.7%	58.0%	72.2%
Mobile	44.4%	46.5%	42.5%	8.4%	65.4%	80.0%
Alabama	34.1%	37.7%	30.0%	7.7%	68.9%	90.9%
U.S.	34.4%	37.4%	31.5%	9.1%	77.7%	84.4%

This is the eighteenth study of the Blue Cross Blue Shield: The Health of America Report® series, a collaboration between BCBSA and Blue Health Intelligence, which uses a market-leading claims database to uncover key trends and insights into healthcare affordability and access to care. Analysis was performed by, and also includes, medical claims data from HealthCore, a wholly owned and independently operated health outcomes subsidiary of Anthem, Inc.

For more information, visit www.bcbs.com/healthofamerica.

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