

## NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION MONTH

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM), a time when we focus on the importance of vaccinations. As the new school year approaches and flu season ahead, it's an ideal moment to highlight the benefits of staying up-to-date with recommended vaccines. Vaccinations not only protect individuals from serious illnesses but also contribute to the elimination of diseases like polio in the United States.

### BACK TO SCHOOL VACCINES

- Children need vaccines at different ages according to a schedule starting at birth.
- Use the parent-friendly vaccine schedule external to health.gov. for children aged 6 years and younger.
- Discuss "catch-up" vaccines with your doctor if your child has missed any.
- Pre-teens aged 11 and 12 should receive important vaccines — consult your doctor for details.
- Keep a record of your child's vaccines for school and activities; it may be required for enrollment.

Ask your doctor for a record of the vaccines your child has received. Keep this list safe as it's necessary for school and other activities. Children who are not current on their vaccinations may not be permitted to attend certain schools.

### MENTAL HEALTH CORNER

As the new school year approaches, prioritize your child's well-being with a consistent routine for sleep, meals, and study to reduce anxiety. Create a supportive home environment where they feel comfortable discussing emotions and school concerns. Encourage physical activity and healthy habits like nutritious eating and relaxation techniques. Limit screen time before bed for better sleep. Foster friendships and positive social interactions with peers, and ensure your child knows who to turn to for support at school. Watch for signs of stress or anxiety, celebrate their achievements, and seek professional help if needed to support their mental health.

