

HSA SMARTNEWS!

August 2013

Back-to-School Health Checklist

As you help your children shop for back-to-school clothing and supplies, be sure to also schedule an annual physical exam. According to the American Academy of Pediatrics, back-to-school physicals should not be limited to student athletes. An annual physical by your children's pediatrician should include eyesight and hearing exams, immunization updates, allergy check-up and a review of developmental milestones. It is also a time when age-appropriate wellness issues may be discussed, such as diet, exercise, diabetes, sports injuries, substance abuse, self esteem, sexuality, sun protection, smoking and bullying.

"Back-to-school checkups are often the only visit most kids and teenagers have with their doctor every year," says [Paul Stricker, M.D., FAAP](#), and author of *Sports Success Rx! Your Child's Prescription for the Best Experience*. "The annual physical gives the pediatrician a chance to give the child a thorough physical exam." Annual exams are preventive care and may be exempt from your HDHP deductible. Schedule one for your student today.

National Immunization Awareness Month

August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM), a time for Americans to focus on improving our national immunization coverage levels. This year, the National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC) is coordinating NIAM activities.

The campaign encourages people of all ages to protect their health through immunization against infectious diseases. While vaccine-preventable disease levels are at or near record lows, the potential for disease outbreaks still exists. Note that vaccines are considered preventive care and may be exempt from High Deductible Health Plan (HDHP) deductibles.

The NPHIC encourages parents to immunize their children by age two and to make sure older children, preteens and teens receive all suggested vaccines before going back to school. College students are also urged to make sure their immunizations are up to date before they move into dormitories. Even adults need to know about the vaccines and boosters they may need. Keep in mind that flu season is just a few short months away!

Did You Know?

According to a recent study by the health insurance lobbyist group, America's Health Insurance Plans (AHIP), the number of participants in HSA-eligible insurance plans has reached nearly 15.5 million, an increase of about 15% over 2012. Additionally, the group's latest annual census found that enrollment in HSAs has more than tripled over the past six years.

Take Good Care of Yourself this August!