



345 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Suite 300  
Bremerton, WA 98337  
kitsappublichealth.org

## Media Release

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CONTACT: Kerry Dobbelaere, PA  
360-337-5238  
kerry.dobbelaere@kitsappublichealth.org

### **Free Vaccination Clinic for Adults on August 14**

BREMERTON, WA — A free vaccination clinic for adults 19 years and older will be offered by the Kitsap Public Health District on August 14, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Sheridan Park Recreation Center located at 680 Lebo Boulevard in Bremerton. Free vaccinations for Hepatitis A/B and Tdap (tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis) will be provided on a walk-in basis.

Kitsap Public Health is committed to protecting more adults in our community against vaccine-preventable diseases. This past spring, an outbreak of Hepatitis A occurred in five states with 30 cases reported. Since the beginning of 2013 there have been 419 cases of pertussis reported in Washington State.

Hepatitis A is a contagious disease affecting the liver. It can range in severity from a mild illness lasting a few weeks to a severe illness lasting several months. Hepatitis A is usually spread when the Hepatitis A virus is taken in by mouth from contact with objects, food, or drinks contaminated by the feces (or stool) of an infected person.

Hepatitis B is also a contagious disease affecting the liver. A person with the Hepatitis B virus may experience a mild illness that lasts a few weeks or may experience lifelong illness. Hepatitis B is usually spread when the blood, semen, or other body fluid from a person infected with the virus enters the body of someone without the virus. This may occur through sexual contact or sharing of needles or other drug-injection equipment. Hepatitis B can also be passed from an infected mother to her baby at birth.

The best way to prevent Hepatitis A/B is by getting vaccinated. The Hepatitis A/B vaccine is given in a three-dose series. Protection against Hepatitis A/B is achieved after completion of all three doses.

The August 14 clinic offers the opportunity for persons to initiate or complete the Hepatitis A/B vaccine series. Follow-up opportunities to receive additional doses, free of charge, will be offered in the fall.

Since 2008, Kitsap Public Health has vaccinated 1,964 individuals in the county with Hepatitis A/B vaccine; however, only 435 of these adults have completed all three doses. The August 14 clinic will provide an opportunity to complete remaining doses and achieve full protection against Hepatitis A /B.

Vaccinating adults for pertussis, also known as whooping cough, is especially important in order to protect babies from the disease. Adults with pertussis may not become very sick but can infect an unimmunized infant for whom pertussis can be a life-threatening illness. At this time, a single dose of Tdap is recommended for all adults. Pregnant women should receive a Tdap vaccine after 28 weeks during each pregnancy.

The vaccines for this free event have been provided through funding from the Americares Foundation and the Washington State Department of Health Adult Hepatitis Project.

The public is invited to contact Kitsap Public Health at (360) 337-5235 if there are additional questions about this event.

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