HEPATITIS B/MENINGITIS AWARENESS

Florida law (1006-69 FS) requires that a postsecondary educational institutional shall provide information concerning the risks associated with meningococcal meningitis and hepatitis B and the availability, effectiveness, and known contradictions of any required or recommended vaccine to every student, or to the student’s parent if the student is a minor, who has been accepted for admission.

Meningitis is a serious disease that affects the brain and spinal cord. Because bacterial meningitis is a grave illness and can rapidly progress to death, it requires early diagnosis and treatment. This is often difficult because the symptoms closely resemble those of the flu and the highest incidence of meningitis occurs during late winter and early spring (flu season). When not fatal, bacterial meningitis can lead to permanent disabilities such as hearing loss, brain damage, or loss of limbs. For more information call the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 1-800-232-2522, or visit the website at: http://www.cdc.gov/meningitis. Hepatitis B is a serious infectious disease caused by a virus that attacks the liver. The hepatitis B virus (HBV) can cause life-long infection that leads to cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver cancer, or liver failure. There is no cure for hepatitis B, but the infection can be prevented by vaccination. Each year about 200,000 people are infected with the virus and 5,000 die. For more information call 1-888-4HEP-CDC, or visit the website at: www.cdc.gov/hepatitis.