

Adolescent vaccination

The growing need for awareness

The future of clean

Cleanliness for greater health starts at home

Influenza

Important facts you should know

MEDIA PLANET

September 2011

PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE



3
TIPS
FOR STAYING HEALTHY THIS FALL/WINTER

CONQUER THE COLD & FLU SEASON

Information to protect your health and the ones you love

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CHALLENGES

I know that by working together, pediatricians and parents can give all children the greatest chance of **success in life.**

Protecting children during the cold and flu season

As parents, we all want our children to be safe and healthy so they have the best chance of success in life. Pediatricians share that goal. When the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) was founded in 1930, the idea that children are not “miniature adults” was brand new. Today we know that children have unique developmental and health needs.

Having regular well-child visits with your child’s pediatrician is important in helping to establish a dialogue that can lead to a healthier life for your child. At these appointments, the pediatrician will perform a physical exam as well as a developmental, behavioral, and learning assessment. Your pediatrician will also advise you which immunizations are recommended for your child. Immunizations—including an annual flu vaccine—are the most important things parents can do to

protect their children from disease.

Parents can take some specific steps to ensure their children get the best start in life:

- The AAP recommends an annual flu vaccine for all children ages 6 months and older. Many vaccine-preventable diseases are most dangerous to infants and young children. Following the recommended immunization schedule for flu and other vaccine-preventable diseases will ensure your child is protected when he or she is most vulnerable.

- Help them eat a healthy diet. Limit sugary drinks and encourage children to eat fruits, vegetables and whole grains.

- Encourage exercise. Children need at least an hour of physical activity daily.

- Limit “screen time” to two hours or less a day.

- Keep them safe. Have iron-clad rules for seat belts and car safety seats in vehicles and helmets when bike riding. If you have guns in the home, be sure they are locked, with the



O. Marion Burton, MD, FAAP
President, American Academy of Pediatrics

“Following the recommended immunization schedule for flu and other vaccine-preventable diseases will ensure your child is protected when he or she is most vulnerable.”

ammunition stored separately and locked.

- If you smoke, quit. Second-hand smoke increases children’s risk of asthma, respiratory infections and other serious health problems.

- Worried about your child’s behavior or development? Your pediatrician can determine if the behavior is normal and help guide your response. If your child needs additional help, early intervention gives the best chance of success.

At www.healthychildren.org, you’ll find a wealth of information about child health, whether you’re looking for treatment guidelines for a specific illness, how to prevent childhood obesity, or advice on monitoring your child’s media use. You can also search for a pediatrician near you. I know that working together, pediatricians and parents can give all children the greatest chance of success in life.

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WE RECOMMEND



Dr. William Schaffner, MD addresses the need for adolescents to have up to date vaccination.

PAGE 6

“Vaccination rates must remain high or we are vulnerable to new outbreaks.”

MEDIA PLANET

PREVENTIVE HEALTHCARE,
2ND EDITION, SEPTEMBER 2011

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Distributed within:
Chicago Sun-Times, September 2011
This section was created by Mediaplanet and did not involve the Chicago Sun-Times or its Editorial Departments.



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NEWS

RETAIL PHARMACIES: IMMEDIATE SOLUTIONS FOR VACCINATIONS



■ **Question:** Where can individuals and families find fast and convenient help during the cold & flu season?
 ■ **Answer:** Retail pharmacies stand ready to offer vaccinations and other preventive measures this season and beyond.



FLU VACCINES. A CDC report released in June 2011 shows that retail pharmacies are becoming popular destination for flu vaccines. PHOTO: ISTOCKPHOTO.COM

Flu season is here, and there are simple, everyday actions you can take to help you and your family stay healthy. Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, cover your nose and mouth with a tissue or your sleeve when you sneeze, and avoid contact with those who are sick.

But the number one thing you can do to prevent the flu is get vaccinated each year:

1. Even if you were vaccinated last year or early in 2011, you still need to get a flu shot this year.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends that anyone ages six months or older should get a flu shot, including those who were vaccinated last season. The flu vaccine's ability to help protect you declines from one year to the next. Remember that vaccination is your first line of defense against the flu.

2. You should get a flu shot as early as possible.

It takes about two weeks for your body to develop full protection against flu symptoms. Seasonal flu can be unpre-

dictable, and even healthy people can get seriously ill from the flu. For best protection, it's important to get a flu shot as soon as it is available.

3. Flu vaccinations are easier than ever to obtain.

A CDC report released in June 2011 shows that retail pharmacies are becoming popular destination for flu vaccines. Flu vaccinations are available every day with no appointment necessary, including evenings and weekends at retail pharmacies.

4. You may be able to get a flu shot at no cost.

Many insurance plans cover flu vaccinations. Most seniors are covered by Medicare Part B.

"A flu shot can reduce the chance of becoming infected by influenza by up to 70 percent. Because it takes about two weeks to achieve full immuniza-

tion after being vaccinated, a flu shot is recommended as soon as vaccine is available," said Paulette Thabault, ANP-BC, MS, Chief Nurse Practitioner Officer, MinuteClinic.

Each year, influenza causes between 3,600 to 49,000 deaths in the United States, and more than 200,000 Americans are hospitalized for flu-related complications annually. This season's vaccine is designed to protect against three influenza viruses, including an influenza B virus and two influenza A viruses, H1N1 and H3N2.

According to the CDC, retail pharmacies are an increasingly popular destination for a flu shot, accounting for more than 18 percent of adults who were vaccinated last season. The proper tools to fight the flu are readily available this flu season, so make sure to check your local retail pharmacies.

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DON'T MISS!

Get the facts on vaccines

At the Chicago Area Immunization Campaign, we work to prevent disease by promoting safe, effective and timely immunizations throughout the lifespan of a child.

In a very profound way, immunizations are the victim of their own success. Because vaccinations are so effective, we see much less disease. Make no mistake, however, these diseases do still exist and for most people, the best way to protect your family is to be fully immunized.

In the first half of this year, the United States has seen more measles cases than it has in 15 years. Measles can be a very dangerous disease. In 1990, there were 123 deaths from measles in the United States. Half of the deaths were in children less



Lisa Kritz, MSW, MBA
 Director, Chicago Area Immunization Campaign, A Project of the Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition, Associate Director, Illinois Maternal and Child Health Coalition

than five years old.

We urge you to get the facts and find out what are the appropriate vaccines for you and your family.

Vaccinating you and your family is one of the most important decisions you can make to protect your family from preventable diseases.

For information please go to ilmaternal.org.

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TIPS

Keep your electronics clean

■ Identify products you come into contact with frequently and make sure they receive regular cleaning. These include items like cell phones, game controllers, house phones, remote controls, keyboards, computer mice, and GPS units.

■ If you take your laptop to work or school, be sure to clean the outside of it regularly. Also, remember to clean the cord after unplugging it.

■ Keep gadgets like MP3 players, cell phones, and Bluetooth headsets in a case whenever possible.

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INSPIRATION

TIP

2

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Nancy Bock
Vice President,
Consumer
Education at the
American Cleaning
Institute

Simple steps to better health

Handwashing is vital 365 days a year. According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the single most important thing we can do to keep from getting sick and spreading illness to others is to wash our hands.

In a 2010 observational study sponsored by ACI and the American Society for Microbiology, 85 percent of adults washed their hands in public restrooms, compared with 77 percent in 2007.

Each year in the U.S., nearly 22 million school days are lost due to colds, and 38 million school days are lost due to the influenza virus. Educational programs are an important component in spreading the word about handwashing.

ACI partners with the CDC in an effort to encourage good hand hygiene practices in school. The Healthy Schools, Healthy People: It's a SNAP program annually recognizes classrooms across the country that incorporate activities, projects or campaigns that focus on clean-hands initiatives.

You can also visit the American Cleaning Institute website—cleaninginstitute.org—for resources on the effective use of hygiene and cleaning products that contribute every day to better living. Handwashing costs very little but the return on investment can be huge.

Question: Are adolescents adequately protected during the cold and flu season?
Answer: Recent studies show a growing need for adolescent vaccination and education.

Protecting adolescents now and into the future

Vaccines recommended for adolescents are underutilized, leaving many of our nation's teens vulnerable to serious illness and even death. Healthcare providers should make every effort to vaccinate adolescents according to the immunization schedule recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to benefit adolescents, their close contacts, and society at large.

Achieving and maintaining high immunization rates is critical for disease prevention. The highly effective U.S. childhood immunization program has led to elimination of endemic transmission of polio, measles, and rubella viruses. These successes are rooted in widespread infant and toddler vaccination. Widespread

immunization of adolescents can lead to similar positive results.

Adolescent immunization rates increasing, but still low

In 2011, CDC reported results from the fifth National Immunization Survey-Teen (NIS-Teen). This national survey assesses adolescent vaccination rates based on data gathered from healthcare providers. Although still too low, vaccination rates have risen each year since the survey began.

Even so, vaccination rates must remain high or we are vulnerable to new outbreaks of "old" diseases. For example, by August of 2011, the U.S. had 191 reported measles cases, half of them hospitalized. This is the most cases in any single year since 1996.

A broad approach to increase vaccinations

Changing behavior among adolescents and their parents or

"While younger children have little or no control over healthcare decisions, adolescents often play a key role in decision-making and are also influenced by their parents or guardians."



William Schaffner, MD
President, National Foundation for Infectious Diseases

guardians will require education and outreach. While younger children have little or no control over healthcare decisions, adolescents often play a key role in decision-making and are also influenced by their parents or guardians. Therefore, it is important that adolescents, as well as their parents or guardians, are educated about the value of vaccines and the seriousness of vaccine-preventable diseases, and that they are empowered to seek information from healthcare providers.

Healthcare providers must also assess their practices and put systems in place to educate their patients and meet increased demand for adolescent immunization.

For additional information, visit nfid.org and adolescentvaccination.org.

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A CLEAN HOME LEADS TO IMPROVED HEALTH



Understanding influenza

Question: Who is at risk during the flu season?

Answer: Several groups are at risk including adults over 50 and healthcare workers.

Influenza (also called “the flu”) is a viral infection in the nose, throat and lungs. About 10 percent to 20 percent of Americans get the flu each year. Most people feel better after a week or two. But for some people with chronic illnesses or other factors, the flu leads to serious diseases, such as pneumonia. The influenza vaccine can help protect you from getting the flu. In 2009, patients had to get one flu shot for the H1N1 virus and the “standard” flu. Now patients can be protected from both forms of influenza in one combined vaccination.

While everyone without a serious egg allergy should be vaccinated, the following people have a higher risk of flu complications or may come in regular contact with people who need to be protected from influenza. Therefore, anyone in any of these groups should get a flu shot as soon as possible.

- All children from six months up to 19 years of age
- All adults 50 years of age and older
- All women who are or will be preg-



Carrie E. Nelson, MD
First Vice President,
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“As a family physician, I strongly encourage all my health care colleagues to protect themselves and their patients, and get a flu shot right away.”

nant during the flu season

- People who are living in nursing homes or long-term-care facilities
- Individuals who have long-term health problems
- Health care workers who have direct contact with patients
- Caregivers and household contacts of children less than six months of age.

As a family physician, I strongly encourage all my health care colleagues to protect themselves and their patients, and get a flu shot right away.

Although influenza vaccine strains for the 2011-12 season are unchanged from those of 2010-11, health experts recommend getting a shot this year even for those who received the vaccine last year. This season’s influenza vaccine protects against three influenza viruses, the 2009 influenza A (H1N1) virus, an influenza A (H3N2) virus, and an influenza B virus. Remember, it takes about two weeks after vaccination for immune protection to begin.

So roll up your sleeves and stay healthy this upcoming flu season. For more helpful health information you can trust, visit familydoctor.org.

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DON'T MISS!

The future of cleaner homes

Utilizing technology to safeguard your health

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) has listed indoor air pollution among the top five environmental health risks that we currently face. Luckily, maintaining a clean floor and utilizing air purifiers can help protect one’s health during the flu and allergy season.

Floors comprise the largest surface area in our homes and can trap harmful pollutants, like dust and allergens. This can drastically affect the health of consumer homes. Consumers can make several improvements to home health by starting with the floors. Healthcare, environmental, building and consumer groups are educating consumers to purchase third-party-certified products. This encourages manufactures to create healthier products that improve consumer health.

There has also been a surprising lack of media coverage on the subject of indoor air quality, with most of the media attention specifically addressing outdoor environmental concerns and air quality. We combine commonsense methods,

strategy and air purifier technology to fight all of these unwelcome particles that are systematically invading our space.

For instance, did you know that we spend up to 90 percent of our time indoors, yet the EPA warns that our indoor air is, on average, two to five times more polluted than outdoor air?

Indoor pollutants are comprised of airborne particles (also known as Particulate Matter) which is a mixture of microscopic solids and liquid droplets suspended in the air. Made up of a diverse array of components, particle pollution elements include dust, chemical fumes, gases, smoke and biological contaminants such as skin flakes, mold, dust mite and roach excrement, pollen, animal dander and various other sources.

Established online dealers, such as Air Purifiers America (AirPurifiersAmerica.com) offer many air purifier shopping options, all with easily compared specs and thousands of customer reviews.

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