

Health Awareness

A County Health Pool Publication



August, 2014

National Immunization Month

Each year in August, National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM) provides an opportunity to highlight the value of immunization across the human lifespan. Activities focus on encouraging all people to protect their health by being immunized against infectious diseases. In 2014, the National Public Health Information Coalition is coordinating NIAM activities.

Immunizations save lives. They are the best way to help protect you or your child from certain infectious diseases. They also help reduce the spread of disease to others and prevent epidemics. Most are given as shots. They are sometimes called vac-



cines, or vaccinations.

In many cases when you get a vaccine, you get a tiny amount of a weakened or dead form of the organism that causes the disease. This amount is not enough to give you the actual disease. But it is enough to cause your immune system to make antibodies that can recognize and attack the organism if you are ever exposed to it.

Sometimes a vaccine does not completely prevent the disease, but it will make the disease much less serious if you do get it.

Some immunizations are needed only one time. Others require several doses over time to help your body be able to fight the disease (build immunity).

What are some reasons to get immunized?

- Immunizations protect you or your child from dangerous diseases.
- They help reduce the spread of disease to others.
- They are often needed for entrance into school or day care. And they may be needed for employment or for travel to another country.
- Getting immunized costs less than getting treated for the diseases that the shots protect you from.
- The risk of getting a disease is much greater than the risk of having a serious reaction to the vaccine.
- When immunization rates



(Over)

National Immunization Month

(Continued)

drop below a certain level, preventable diseases show up again. Often, these diseases are hard to treat. For example, measles outbreaks still occur in the U.S.

If you are a woman who is planning to get pregnant, talk to your doctor about what immunizations you have had and what you may need to protect your baby. And if you live with a pregnant woman, make sure your vaccines are up-to-date.

Traveling to other countries may be another reason to get immunized. Talk with your doctor months before you leave, to see if you need any shots.

The National Immunization Awareness Month Communi-

cation Toolkit, developed by NPHIC in collaboration with CDC is available on the CDC website <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niam.html>.

The toolkit includes key messages, sample media materials, social media content, and event ideas.

The National Health Information Center offers resources that will:

- Encourage parents of young children to get recommended immunizations by age two;
- Help parents make sure older children, preteens, and teens have received all recommended vaccines by the time they go back to school; and share informa-

tion geared toward parents of 9-18 year olds.

- Remind college students to catch up on immunizations before they move into dormitories
- Educate adults, including healthcare workers, about vaccines and boosters they may need
- Educate pregnant women about getting vaccinated to protect newborns from diseases like whooping cough (pertussis)
- Remind everyone that the next flu season is only a few months away

People of all ages can protect their health with timely vaccination.

webmd.com; healthfinder.gov

Benefits Corner

Reminder:

Immunization Coverage Under CHP

As a reminder, certain preventive services are covered under CHP at 100% due to the PPACA Regulations. Included in the preventive services are certain recommended immunizations for various ages. For a detail list of the immunizations that are recommended by Centers of Disease Control and Prevention please go to the CDC website <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/adult.html>