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August Is National Immunization Awareness Month

August 2011

Dear ,

It's your friend, Barry Cohn
at **RGEB** here.

Who & Where We Are

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August is National Immunizations Awareness Month. Please watch the video above for some information such as preventive tips, immunization recommendations, and health insurance facts that you may find helpful. I've also enclosed various articles and facts about flu shots, vaccines, safety concerns, and more.

Immunization

Immunizations are important for healthy child development and remain vital throughout a person's lifetime. August is National Immunization Awareness Month. And it's important to talk to your doctor about the right schedule of preventive services for you and your family. The enclosed information is meant to help

For more information about National Immunization Awareness Month, click [here](#).

Companies We Represent



For a complete list, click [here](#) to go to our website

Information is meant to help you better understand protective immunizations.



Insurance Plans

If you enroll in a new health plan on or after September 23, 2010, then that plan is required to cover **recommended preventive services**— including recommended immunizations—without charging a deductible, copayment or coinsurance. See HealthCare.gov for more.

Flu Shots

Influenza (flu) and pneumonia aren't always minor illnesses. They can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, dehydration, and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as heart

Immunizations Are Not Just For Kids

Read the article [here](#).

How Do Vaccines Work?

When you're sick, your body's immune system kicks in to fight off the microbes that cause the disease. The immune system also recognizes microbes it's encountered before and protects us when our bodies encounter them again. Without the immune system, a routine cold could be deadly.

Some microbes are so strong that they can overwhelm the immune system. Vaccinations help strengthen the immune system to prevent that from happening. Vaccines are made of microbes that have been weakened or deadened so that they don't cause a disease. Your body quickly gets rid of these harmless microbes by producing antibodies that attack them

failure, asthma, or diabetes.
Help protect yourself by:

- Getting a flu shot every year
- Getting a pneumonia vaccine* if you are over age 65, or if you have a chronic medical condition (ask your doctor how often)

When to Get a Flu Shot

October or November is the best time to get vaccinated. Flu season can begin as early as October and last as late as May.

Who Should Get a Flu Shot?

In general, anyone who wants to reduce their chances of getting the flu can get vaccinated. The CDC recommends that people in certain priority groups get vaccinated each year. They include:

- People age 50+.
- People of any age with certain chronic medical

antibodies that attack them. The antibodies remain in your immune system, ready to repel these microbes when they're encountered again.



conditions.

- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities.
- Anyone who is in close contact with children ages newborn to 5 years; health care workers and those who provide child and elder care.
- Pregnant women.
- All children ages 6 months and up.



Who Should Not Get a Flu Shot?

Some people should not be vaccinated without first consulting a physician including:

- People with allergies to chicken eggs
- People who have had a severe reaction to a flu shot in the past
- Children less than six months of age
- People who are mildly or severely ill should wait to get a flu shot when their symptoms lessen

What to Expect After Getting a Flu Shot

Almost all people who receive influenza vaccine have no serious problems from it. You cannot get the flu from a flu shot. Some minor side effects can begin soon after the shot and usually last one to two days. Side effects may include soreness where the shot was given, low-grade fever, and aches.

Talk to your doctor if you have concerns about getting a flu shot. Also remember to tell your doctor if you got a flu shot somewhere other than his/her office. Choose to be flu-free this year.

Sources:



-Centers for Disease Control and Prevention –

www.cdc.gov

-Flu information from

www.flu.gov

Why Immunize?

Most of us born in the last 50 years no longer fear diseases like polio, measles and whooping cough.

But at one time these diseases were common, and catching them could have devastating consequences - paralysis, birth defects and even death.

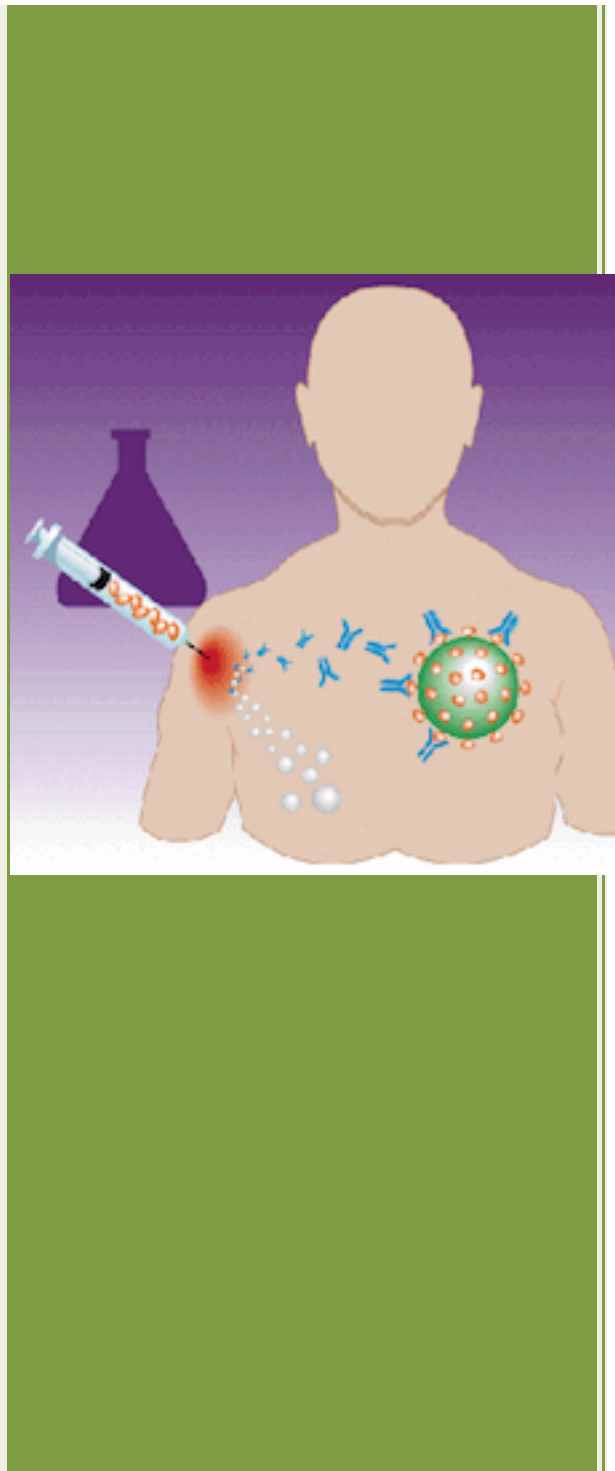
Before the introduction of vaccines, such diseases took a heavy toll in the U.S. Each year:

- Ten thousand children were paralyzed by polio.
- Twenty thousand newborns had birth defects and mental retardation from rubella (German measles).
- Four million children would be infected with measles, and 3,000 would die from it.



- Diphtheria was one of the most common causes of death in school-aged children.
- Fifteen thousand children would contract Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib), which causes meningitis. Many were left permanently brain damaged.
- Thousands of infants were killed by pertussis (whooping cough)

Because many of these diseases are no longer commonplace, we tend to think the vaccinations against them are no longer necessary. But each year as many as 60,000 adults in the U.S. die from the flu, tetanus and pneumonia - diseases that could have been prevented by vaccines. The U.S. government's goal is to vaccinate at least 90 percent of people 65 and older for flu and pneumonia.





But as of summer 2007 those percentages were far short of that goal. An estimated 69 percent had received a flu vaccine and 67 percent a pneumococcal vaccine. A community can be protected from certain diseases when a high percentage of its population has been immunized. Some people who haven't been immunized may still contract a disease, but it's less likely to spread to the rest of the community. This is called community, or herd, immunity. When not enough people are adequately immunized, an outbreak of a disease is more likely. In 1989, there was a measles outbreak in the U.S. because of low vaccination rates. The result was more than 55,000 cases of measles and 136 deaths.



Safety Concerns

Safety concerns

Some reports have suggested a link between vaccines and serious disorders. Although these reports are not conclusive, they have raised concerns about whether the benefits of being immunized outweigh the risks of getting a disease. All medicines carry the risk of causing side effects, and vaccines are no exception. As with all drugs, no vaccine is 100 percent effective or safe. However, vaccines are licensed by the U.S. Food and Drug Administration before they're used in this country. And before approval, they undergo rigorous testing.

Based on these safety concerns, some parents may reconsider having their child vaccinated. They may incorrectly assume that the disease has been virtually eradicated and the risk of exposure is minimal.





But in 2008, there were 173 cases of measles reported in the U.S.; most of them occurred among children who hadn't been immunized. And in the same year, three unimmunized children in Minnesota developed invasive Hib disease; one of them died as a result.

Wishing you good health!

Barry
RGEB
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