Communication Toolkit: Adults

All adults should get vaccines to protect their health. Even healthy adults can become seriously ill, and can pass certain illnesses on to others. Immunization is especially important for older adults and for adults with chronic conditions such as asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), diabetes or heart disease. Immunization is also important for anyone who is in close contact with the very young, the very old, people with weakened immune systems, and those who cannot be vaccinated.

All adults should get the influenza (flu) vaccine each year to protect against seasonal flu. Every adult should also get the Td or Tdap vaccine once if they did not receive it as an adolescent to protect against pertussis (whooping cough), and then a Td (tetanus, diphtheria) booster shot every 10 years. In addition, women are also recommended to get the Tdap vaccine each time they are pregnant, preferably at 27 through 36 weeks.

Adults may need other vaccines – such as shingles, pneumococcal, hepatitis, HPV – depending on one’s age, occupation, travel, health status, vaccination history, and other risk factors.

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Key Messages

Use key messages as the basis for talking points, presentations, media interviews, news releases, social media messages or outreach materials. Localize with information or stories from your own organization or community.

Vaccines are an important step in protecting adults against several serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases.

- The need for vaccination does not end in childhood. Vaccines are recommended throughout our lives based on age, lifestyle, occupation, locations of travel, medical conditions and vaccines received in the past.

- The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) updates vaccines recommended for adults each year based on the latest research on vaccine safety, effectiveness, and patterns of vaccine-preventable diseases.

- ACIP’s vaccination recommendations are also reviewed and approved by professional medical provider organizations, including the American College of Physicians, American Academy of Family Physicians, American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists, and American College of Nurse-Midwives.

Every year, thousands of adults in the U.S. needlessly suffer, are hospitalized, and even die from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines.

- Vaccines are recommended for adults to prevent serious diseases such as influenza, shingles, pneumonia caused by pneumococcal bacteria, hepatitis, and whooping cough.

- Older adults and adults with chronic conditions are at risk for serious complications from vaccine-preventable diseases.

- Many of these diseases are common in the U.S., and all adults – even healthy ones – can benefit from vaccination.

- Some vaccines can help prevent cancer. Hepatitis B vaccine can prevent liver cancer that can develop after developing chronic hepatitis B. The HPV vaccine can prevent cancers caused by HPV infection, including cervical, vaginal, vulvar and anal cancer.

- Vaccination is important because it not only protects the person receiving the vaccine, but also helps prevent the spread of diseases to others – especially those who are most vulnerable to serious complications, such as infants and young children, the elderly, and those with chronic conditions and weakened immune systems.
Most adults have probably not received all the vaccines they need.

- Unfortunately, far too few adults are receiving the recommended vaccines, leaving themselves and their loved ones vulnerable to serious diseases.

- According to CDC data, in 2013:
  - Only 17% of adults 19 years or older had received Tdap vaccination. – *National Health Interview Survey 2013*
  - Only 24% of adults 60 years or older had received shingles (herpes zoster) vaccination. – *National Health Interview Survey 2013*
  - Only 21% of adults 19 to 64 years at high risk had received pneumococcal vaccination. – *National Health Interview Survey 2013*
  - Only 42% of adults 18 years or older received a flu vaccine during the 2013-2014 flu season. – *Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System 2014*

- Although adults believe immunization is important, many are unaware that they need vaccines. Health care professionals play a critical role in educating their patients about recommended vaccines and ensuring that they are fully immunized.

- CDC asks ALL health care professionals – whether they provide immunization services or not – to routinely assess the vaccine needs of their patients and make a strong recommendation for needed vaccinations.

- Adults should talk with their doctors to learn which vaccines are recommended for them, and take steps to stay up to date.

- Vaccines are available at private doctors’ offices, as well as other convenient locations such as pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics and health departments.

Vaccines are very safe.

- Vaccines are thoroughly tested before licensing and carefully monitored even after they are licensed to ensure that they are very safe.

- Side effects from vaccines are usually mild and temporary. Some people may have allergic reactions to certain vaccines, but serious and long-term side effects are rare.
Talk with your clinician about which vaccines are right for you.

- Talk with your health care professional to learn which vaccines are right for you based on your age, health, job, lifestyle, and other factors.

- Vaccines are available at private doctor offices, as well as other convenient locations such as pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics and health departments.

- To find a vaccine provider near you: www.vaccine.healthmap.org
Adult Vaccine Information

These are key points about adult vaccines. Full recommendations for each vaccine can be found at: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/ACIP-list.htm

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Influenza (Flu) Vaccine

- The single best way to prevent the flu is to get a flu vaccine each season. A yearly flu vaccine is recommended for everyone age 6 months and older.

- While everyone should get vaccinated, certain people are at greater risk for serious complications if they get the flu, including: people 65 years and older, young children, pregnant women, people with certain health conditions such as asthma, Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disease (COPD), diabetes or heart disease, and people living in facilities like nursing homes.

- Annual flu vaccination is also important for anyone who lives with or cares for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications.

- Flu is unpredictable and how severe it is can vary widely from one season to the next depending on many factors, including: what flu viruses are spreading, how much flu vaccine is available, when vaccine is available, how many people get vaccinated, and how well the flu vaccine is matched to flu viruses that are causing illness.

- Flu season can begin as early as October, last as late as May, and typically peaks between December and February.

- It takes about two weeks after vaccination for antibodies to develop for protection against influenza virus infection. People should get vaccinated soon after vaccine becomes available, ideally by October, in order to increase their chances of being protected before flu begins circulating in their community.

- Flu vaccines will not protect against flu-like illnesses caused by non-influenza viruses.

- Complications of flu can include bacterial pneumonia, ear infections, sinus infections, dehydration and worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma or diabetes.

- The seasonal flu vaccine prevented more than 40,000 flu-associated deaths in the United States during a nine year period: 2005/06 - 2013/14.
Tetanus and Tdap Vaccine

- Tdap vaccine is recommended for adults age 19 and older who did not get Tdap as an adolescent to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough).

- Tdap vaccine is especially important for adults who will have close contact with newborn babies or infants younger than age 1.

- Tdap vaccination is also recommended for pregnant women, ideally during the third trimester (27 through 36 weeks) of each pregnancy, to help protect their newborns from whooping cough.
  - Tdap vaccine can be safely given at any time during pregnancy, but is recommended during the third trimester to pass the most amount of protection to the baby.

- Tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis are all caused by bacteria.
  - Both diphtheria and pertussis are spread from person to person.
  - Tetanus enters the body through cuts, scratches or wounds.

- More than 28,000 cases of pertussis were provisionally reported in 2014. Data show that more than 48,000 cases of pertussis occurred in 2012, a nearly 60-year high.

- Up to five in 100 adults with whooping cough are hospitalized and more will have complications. Adults may pass on whooping cough to infants, who are at most risk for severe illness, hospitalization and death from pertussis.

- Tdap is an effective vaccine, but it does not protect as well as we would like and may only protect against whooping cough for a few years.

- Adults who haven’t had a Tdap shot yet should talk with their doctor about getting it as soon as possible, no matter when they last had a tetanus (Td) booster.

- After receiving the Tdap shot, adults should continue to get a Td booster every 10 years.

- Adults need to get Tdap even if they were vaccinated as a child or have been sick with whooping cough in the past; neither provides lifelong protection.
Hepatitis A Vaccine

- Hepatitis A vaccine is recommended for:
  - adults traveling to or working in countries where hepatitis A is common, such as countries in Central or South America, Mexico, Asia (except Japan), Africa, and Eastern Europe
  - men who have sex with men
  - people who use illegal drugs
  - people who have clotting factor disorders
  - people with chronic liver disease
  - people whose occupation might expose them to hepatitis A (such as those who work with hepatitis A virus in laboratory settings or with hepatitis A-infected primates)
  - members of households planning to adopt a child, or care for a newly arriving adopted child, from a country where hepatitis A is common.

- Hepatitis A is caused by a virus. It spreads primarily by oral contact with fecal matter, person to person, or by contaminated food or water.

- More than 95% of adults will develop immunity within one month of a single dose of hepatitis A vaccine. Nearly 100% will have immunity after two doses.

Hepatitis B Vaccine

- Hepatitis B vaccination is recommended for adults at high risk of infection by sexual or blood exposure to hepatitis B virus.

- People at high risk of sexual exposure include sex partners of people who are positive for Hepatitis B, people who have had more than one sex partner in the last six months, people seeking evaluation or treatment for a sexually transmitted disease, and men who have sex with men.

- People at risk of blood exposure include current or recent injection-drug users, household contacts of people who are positive for Hepatitis B, residents and staff of facilities for the developmentally disabled, people with end-stage renal disease, and some health care and public safety workers.

- Other groups at risk include international travelers to regions with high or intermediate levels of Hepatitis B infection and people with HIV infection.
- Hepatitis B is caused by a virus and is spread from person to person primarily through blood or semen.

- In healthy adults, the vaccine is 80% to 95% effective in preventing infection or clinical hepatitis in those who complete a hepatitis B vaccine series (usually three doses).

**Shingles (Herpes Zoster) Vaccine**
- One dose of shingles (herpes zoster) vaccine is recommended for adults aged 60 years or older.

- Shingles occurs when chickenpox (zoster varicella) virus reactivates from a dormant state later in life.

- Pain from shingles lesions, called post-herpetic neuralgia, can be very severe and can last a year or more.

- 50% of people who live until age 85 will develop shingles without vaccination.

- In people 60 years and older, the shingles vaccine:
  - reduces the risk of shingles by about half (51%)
  - reduces the risk of prolonged pain at the rash site (post-herpetic neuralgia) by 67%

- The shingles vaccine is effective for at least six years but may last longer. Research is being done on this topic.

**Pneumococcal Vaccine**
- Two pneumococcal vaccines are recommended for adults: a pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) and a pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23).

- PCV13 protects against 13 of the approximately 90 types of pneumococcal bacteria that can cause pneumococcal disease, including pneumonia, meningitis, and bacteremia.

- PPSV23 protects against 23 types of pneumococcal bacteria. This vaccine helps prevent invasive infections like meningitis and bacteremia, but only offers low levels of protection against pneumonia.

- Both pneumococcal vaccines are recommended for all adults age 65 and older.
• PCV13 is recommended for:
  o all adults 65 years or older
  o adults 19 years or older with certain health conditions such as sickle cell disease or the absence of a spleen
  o adults 19 years or older with weakened immune systems, including those with HIV infection

• PPSV23 is recommended for:
  o all adults 65 years or older
  o adults 19 years or older with health conditions such as heart disease, lung disease (including asthma), sickle cell disease, diabetes, alcoholism, and cirrhosis
  o adults 19 years or older with weakened immune systems, including those with HIV infection
  o adults who smoke cigarettes

• For adults who need both PCV13 and PPSV23 vaccines, the PCV13 vaccine should be given first, followed by the PPSV23 vaccine two or more months later. These vaccines should not be given at the same visit.

• Each year in the United States, about 520,000 adults 65 years or older get pneumococcal disease and about 18,000 of them die.

• The majority of cases and deaths occur among adults 50 years or older, with the highest rates among those 65 years or older. Almost everyone who gets invasive pneumococcal disease needs treatment in the hospital.

• Overall, PPSV23 is 30% to 70% effective in preventing invasive pneumococcal disease, such as meningitis and bloodstream infections.
  o Effectiveness is highest among otherwise healthy adults.
  o Effectiveness is lowest among adults who have significant underlying illness.
Vaccine Safety

- **Vaccines are tested and monitored.**
  Vaccines are tested in clinical trials with thousands of volunteers and are shown to be safe and effective before being licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

  Both the CDC and FDA continue to monitor vaccines after they are licensed.

- **Vaccine side effects are usually mild and temporary.**
  The most common side effects are soreness, redness or swelling where the shot was given.

  Severe side effects are very rare.

- **Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health.**
  Even people taking prescription medications can be vaccinated. However, if you are pregnant, or have a weakened immune system, talk with your health care professional before being vaccinated, as some vaccines may not be recommended for you.
Frequently Asked Questions

Incorporate relevant facts into your outreach via talks, emails, web content, outreach and social media channels. Cut and paste these Q&As and customize for your own organization. Provide a fact sheet as a resource to news media and partners. Include interesting data as part of your organization’s email signature.

Why do adults need vaccines?
Vaccines are recommended throughout your life. Even if you were fully vaccinated as a child, you may be at risk for other diseases due to your age, job, lifestyle, travel, or health condition. In addition, the protection from some vaccines can wear off over time. All adults need vaccinations to protect against serious diseases that could result in missed work, severe illness requiring medical treatment or even hospitalization, and not being able to care for family.

Are vaccine-preventable diseases really a threat for adults?
Every year, thousands of adults in the U.S. suffer serious health problems, are hospitalized, and even die from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. Many of these diseases are common in the U.S. For example, in 2013, there were about 30,000 cases of invasive pneumococcal disease and 3,400 deaths among adults ages 19 and older. In addition, about 1 million cases of shingles and millions of cases of influenza occur each year in the U.S.

Older adults and adults with chronic health conditions such as asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD), heart disease and diabetes are at higher risk of suffering complications from certain vaccine-preventable diseases like flu and pneumonia.

What vaccines do adults need? How often and when do they need them?
All persons 6 months of age and older are recommended to get the flu vaccine every year. Among adults, it’s especially important for those who are high risk for flu-related complications, including adults 65 years and older, people with chronic conditions like asthma, diabetes, or heart disease; parents of young children (because young children are at high risk); and pregnant women.

Getting vaccinated while pregnant during any trimester decreases the risk of flu and flu-related illnesses for the mother and baby throughout the pregnancy and can protect the baby for up to 6 months after birth. This protection is crucial since children younger than 6 months old are too young to receive their own flu vaccine, but are at high risk of severe illnesses from influenza.

All adults should get a one-time dose of Tdap vaccine to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough) if they did not receive this vaccine as an adolescent. After receiving Tdap, all adults should receive a Td booster every 10 years to protect against tetanus, which can be caused by a harmful bacteria in the environment that can enter through broken skin.
Women are recommended to get a Tdap vaccine during the third trimester of every pregnancy to protect themselves and their newborn babies against whooping cough. They should get the Tdap during pregnancy even if they have had a prior Tdap shot.

Other vaccines you need as an adult are determined by factors such as age, lifestyle, job, health condition, and vaccines you’ve received in the past. Vaccines that may be recommended for you are vaccines that protect against shingles, pneumococcal disease, human papillomavirus (which can cause certain cancers), meningococcal disease, hepatitis A and B, chickenpox (varicella), and measles, mumps and rubella (MMR).

If you’re traveling abroad, you may need additional vaccines. Check the CDC travel website at www.cdc.gov/travel for more information on what you should do to prepare for travel based on where you are traveling.

*Ask your healthcare professional which vaccines are right for you.*

**Are there vaccines specific to adults or are they boosters of vaccines adults have already received?**

Some vaccines recommended for adults can be boosters, like the Tdap vaccine, which provide a boost in immunity against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis. Other vaccines protect against diseases that are more common in adults. For instance, the zoster vaccine protects against shingles, a disease more common in adults; this vaccine is not recommended for children.

Adults should make sure to discuss vaccines with their doctor or other healthcare professionals. You can also get information on which vaccines you might need by taking a brief quiz at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults.

**Why are we hearing about these vaccines now?**

Many of the vaccines recommended for adults have been around for years.

We’re hearing more about the MMR vaccine because of the recent measles outbreaks in the U.S. Unvaccinated travelers that are infected with measles abroad continue to bring the disease into the United States; and once they do, it can spread when it reaches communities with groups of people who are unvaccinated, including unvaccinated adults. For those travelling internationally, CDC recommends that all U.S. residents older than 6 months receive MMR vaccine, if needed, prior to departure.

One reason we’re hearing more about Tdap vaccine is the increase in whooping cough in the last few years. More than 28,000 cases were provisionally reported in the United States in 2014. This represents an 18% increase compared to the provisional numbers that were reported at the same time in 2013. We have learned that protection from the DTaP whooping cough vaccine given to children doesn’t last into adulthood.
Therefore, all adults are recommended to get one dose of Tdap vaccine if they did not receive Tdap vaccination as an adolescent. CDC also recommends that women get a Tdap vaccine during the third trimester of EACH pregnancy to give their baby short-term protection from whooping cough when he/she is too young to be immunized.

Getting vaccinated during pregnancy is important as this can provide protection to children less than three months old—those most likely to have severe illness from pertussis. Whooping cough is most severe for babies; about half of infants younger than 1 year of age who get the disease need treatment in the hospital and 1-2 percent of infants who are hospitalized with whooping cough will die.

**How can I find out which vaccines I need?**
Ask your doctor or other healthcare professional which vaccines are right for you based on your age, job, lifestyle, health conditions and vaccines you received as a child. You can also visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults) for more information and find a link to an adult vaccine quiz to see which vaccines are recommended for you.

**What are potential risks from adult vaccines?**
Side effects from vaccines are usually mild and temporary, such as soreness where the shot was given or a slight fever that goes away within a few days. Some people may have allergic reactions to certain vaccines, but serious and long-term effects are rare. However, the benefits of vaccination greatly outweigh the risks.

Anyone who gets a vaccine should be fully informed about both the benefits and the risks of vaccination. Any questions or concerns should be discussed with a healthcare professional.

**Are adult vaccines safe?**
Yes. The longstanding vaccine safety system in the U.S. ensures that vaccines are safe.

Safety monitoring begins with the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA), which ensures the safety, and effectiveness of vaccines for the United States. Before a vaccine is approved by the FDA for use by the public, the results of studies on safety and effectiveness of the vaccine are evaluated by highly trained FDA scientists and doctors. FDA also inspects the sites where vaccines are manufactured to make sure they follow strict manufacturing guidelines.

FDA and CDC continue to monitor vaccines after licensing to ensure continued safety of the vaccines in the U.S.

**What are the ingredients in vaccines?**
Vaccines contain ingredients called antigens (the part of the vaccine that helps your body build up protection against viruses), which cause the body to develop immunity.
Vaccines can also contain very small amounts of other ingredients which can vary by vaccine — these ingredients play necessary roles either in making the vaccine, or in ensuring that the vaccine is safe and effective, such as preventing vaccine contamination.

For more information: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/additives.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/additives.htm).

**Are vaccines safe for people with certain health conditions or people who take prescription medications?**

For people with chronic health conditions like diabetes, asthma, or heart disease, it is actually more important to be up-to-date on vaccines because they are at higher risk for complications from certain vaccine-preventable diseases like flu and pneumonia. For instance, diabetes can make the immune system less able to fight infections. Additionally, flu illness can make it harder for someone with diabetes to control their blood sugars. These complications put people with diabetes at great risk of flu-related hospitalizations. That’s why it’s especially important for people with diabetes to get the flu vaccine every year.

It is safe for people who are taking prescription medications to get vaccines. There are, however, other factors that may make it unsafe for individuals to get certain vaccines, such as allergy to a vaccine or a certain vaccine ingredient. And live vaccines should not be given to people with weakened immune systems or to pregnant women. Talk to your healthcare professional to determine which vaccines are right for you.

**How well do adult vaccines work?**

The amount of protection from vaccination varies by vaccine and each person’s age and health. Vaccines generally work better when given to younger, healthier people, but immunization is the best defense against many of these serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases. If you’ve been vaccinated and become ill with the disease after having developed immunity from the vaccine, your illness may be less severe than if you had not been vaccinated.

**Will health insurance help pay for vaccines?**

All Health Insurance Marketplace plans and most other private insurance plans must cover the following list of vaccines without charging a copayment or coinsurance when provided by an in-network provider:

- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- Shingles
- Human Papillomavirus
- Influenza
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella
- Meningococcal
- Pneumococcal
- Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis
- Chickenpox
Check with your health insurance provider for details. Make sure to ask them which providers you can go to for vaccinations.

Medicare Part B will pay for the following vaccines:
- Influenza (flu) vaccine
- Pneumococcal vaccines
- Hepatitis B vaccines for persons at increased risk of hepatitis
- Vaccines directly related to the treatment of an injury or direct exposure to a disease or condition, such as rabies and tetanus

Medicare Part D or Medicare Advantage Plan Part C that offers Medicare prescription drug coverage may also have partial or full coverage for other vaccines, including:
- Shingles vaccine
- MMR vaccine, and
- Tdap vaccine.

Most state Medicaid agencies cover at least some adult immunizations but may not offer all vaccines. Check with your state Medicaid agency for more information. Talk to your part C part D plans to find out what your out-of-pocket costs might be for immunizations.

**Where can you get vaccines?**
Vaccines may be available at private doctor offices, pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, health departments, or other community locations such as schools and religious centers. There is an online tool to help you find immunization providers near you: [http://vaccine.healthmap.org](http://vaccine.healthmap.org).

You can also contact your state or local health department to learn more about where to get vaccines in your community. If your healthcare professional does not stock all the vaccines recommended for you, ask for a referral.

**Why aren’t adults getting their recommended vaccines?**
Many adults don’t realize they need vaccines to protect against diseases like whooping cough, hepatitis A and B, or pneumococcal disease. Even for those that do realize they need additional vaccines, there are challenges to staying up-to-date. As adults, we tend to worry about day-to-day things and are busy caring for our families, so we don’t often think about preventive measures that can help keep us healthy. That’s why it’s so critical for clinicians to strongly recommend the vaccines that patients need. It’s also important for clinicians to refer patients to providers in the area for vaccines they don’t stock.

Cost may be an issue for some adults. However, most private health insurance covers routinely recommended vaccines. Those eligible for Medicare and Medicaid also have coverage for certain vaccines.
What’s the bottom line? What should people know about adult vaccinations?

There are many things adults do to stay healthy. We know we need to eat the right foods and exercise. We need to get our recommended cancer screenings. Another important thing we need to do is get our recommended vaccines.

Adults that aren’t up-to-date on their vaccines are at greater risk of getting and spreading certain vaccine-preventable diseases. It is especially important for older adults and those with chronic health conditions such as heart disease, asthma, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) and diabetes to get vaccinated because they are at higher risk for complications from diseases. CDC encourages all adults to talk to their healthcare professional about which vaccines are right for them – and get vaccinated.

Shingles

I’ve heard more about shingles in the past few years. Since I had chickenpox, is the virus still in my body?

Anyone who has recovered from chickenpox still has the virus in their body. It stays in the body in an inactive (dormant) state, but can become active again later and cause shingles. One out of every three people will get shingles at some point in their lives. You have a greater chance of getting shingles when you’re older, which is why the vaccine is recommended for everyone 60 years and older.

Measles

How many cases of measles have there been this year?

Between January 1 and June 26, 2015, there have been 178 cases of measles reported in the U.S.

Unvaccinated travelers that are infected with measles abroad continue to bring the disease into the United States; and once they do, it can spread when it reaches communities with groups of people who are unvaccinated, including unvaccinated adults. Many of the cases of measles this year have been in unvaccinated adults, which is a great reminder for adults to talk to their healthcare professional to make sure they have received all the vaccines they need. For those travelling internationally, CDC recommends that all U.S. residents older than 6 months receive MMR vaccine, if needed, prior to departure.

Measles is very contagious and can cause serious illness. The best way for adults to protect themselves and their loved ones from measles is to get vaccinated.
Pneumococcal Disease

Who is recommended to get pneumococcal vaccine?
There are two pneumococcal vaccines: PCV13 and PPSV23. CDC recommends both of these vaccines for adults 65 years of age or older. Adults aged 19 to 64 may also need one or both pneumococcal vaccines if they have certain medical conditions.

Like the pneumococcal vaccine, recommendations for other vaccines may also need to be tailored to each individual person’s situation. So adults should make sure to discuss vaccines with their doctor or other healthcare professional. You can get information on which vaccines you might need by taking the adult quiz at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz.

Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Why is it important for me to be vaccinated against whooping cough?
While whooping cough may not be as serious for adults as it is for infants, it is important that adults get vaccinated to protect themselves and help protect infants. Whooping cough is most severe for babies; about half of infants younger than 1 year of age who get the disease need treatment in the hospital and 1 to 2 percent of infants who are hospitalized with whooping cough will die.

Whooping cough is not a disease of the past. While we no longer see the number of cases we did before whooping cough vaccines were available, it is a growing health concern. More than 28,000 cases of whooping cough were provisionally reported in 2014. This year, there are outbreaks across the country, with cases reaching epidemic levels in California.

Why are cases of whooping cough increasing?
There are several reasons that help explain why we’re seeing more reported cases of whooping cough lately. We are more aware of whooping cough, have better tests to diagnose it, and have better systems for reporting. There is also more circulation of the bacteria and waning immunity.

Therefore, we now need to have additional doses of whooping cough vaccine to increase immunity.

Why do women need to get Tdap vaccine with each pregnancy?
Whooping cough can be serious for anyone, but it is life-threatening in newborns and young babies. Most of the deaths reported in 2013 were in babies younger than 3 months of age, and about half of babies who get whooping cough need treatment in the hospital.
CDC recommends that pregnant women receive the Tdap vaccine during each pregnancy because the mother’s body creates protective antibodies and passes them to her baby before birth. These antibodies give babies some short-term protection against whooping cough until they can begin building their own immunity through childhood vaccinations. The amount of whooping cough antibodies a person has decreases over time. Women need a whooping cough vaccine during each pregnancy so high levels of protective antibodies are transferred to each baby.

**Influenza**

**Can you get the flu from the flu vaccine?**
No. Neither the flu shot nor the nasal spray flu vaccine can give you the flu. Flu shots are currently made in two ways: the vaccine is made either with a) flu vaccine viruses that have been ‘inactivated’ and are therefore not infectious, or b) with no flu vaccine viruses at all (which is the case for recombinant influenza vaccine). Different flu shots are approved for people of different ages, but there are flu shots that are approved for use in people 6 months of age and older. The most common side effects from the flu shot are soreness, redness, tenderness or swelling where the shot was given. Low-grade fever, headache and muscle aches also may occur.

The viruses contained in the nasal spray flu vaccine are greatly weakened, which means they cannot cause flu illness. These weakened viruses are also cold-adapted, meaning they are designed to only cause mild infection at the cooler temperatures found within the nose. These viruses cannot infect the lungs or other areas of the body where warmer temperatures exist. The nasal spray is approved for people 2 through 49 years of age. It is well tolerated and the most commonly reported side effects are mild and include runny nose, nasal congestion and cough.

**Where can I get more information?**
- Talk with your health care provider about which vaccines are right for you.
- Visit CDC’s website on adult vaccination: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/index.html)
- Take the CDC quiz to find out which vaccines are recommended for you: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz)
- Use the Healthmap Vaccine Finder to find vaccines: [http://vaccine.healthmap.org/](http://vaccine.healthmap.org/)
- For more information on adult vaccines and the Affordable Care Act, visit: [www.healthcare.gov/what-are-my-preventive-care-benefits/](http://www.healthcare.gov/what-are-my-preventive-care-benefits/)
News Release

You can customize this news release with information, stories or events happening in your community. Submit news releases, articles or op-eds to local news and partner organizations to publish, post on your websites, or share through social media. Distribute to key partners and decision makers.

Adults Need Vaccines, Too!

[name of organization] Celebrates National Immunization Awareness Month

Every year, thousands of adults in the United States suffer serious health problems, are hospitalized, or even die from diseases that could have been prevented by vaccination.

To celebrate the importance of immunizations throughout life – and to help remind adults that they need vaccines, too – the [name of local organization] is recognizing August as National Immunization Awareness Month. This is the perfect opportunity to make sure adults are protected against diseases like flu, whooping cough, tetanus, shingles and pneumococcal disease.

[insert name of local organization and information on any events local organization is hosting or is aware of].

The specific vaccines adults need are determined by factors such as age, lifestyle, risk conditions, locations of travel, and previous vaccines. All adults should talk to their health care providers about which vaccines are right for them.

“There is a misconception among many adults that vaccines are just for children,” said [insert name of local official]. “The truth is, you never outgrow the need for immunizations.”

To find out which vaccines might be right for you and where you can get vaccinated, visit [insert local organization and/or CDC web site] or call [insert local organization phone number].

# # #
Ready-to-Publish Article
Here are sample ‘ready-to-publish’ articles to submit to local news and partner organizations to publish, post on your web site or share through social media. Distribute to key partners and decision makers.

Word Count: ~ 530

There are many things we want to pass on to our loved ones – illness is not one of them

You want to pass on certain things like family traditions, a grandmother’s quilt or dad’s love of books – but no one wants to pass on a serious illness. Take charge of your health and help protect those around you by asking about vaccines at your next doctor’s visit.

Vaccinating our children is commonplace in the United States. But few adults know they need vaccines, and even fewer are fully vaccinated.

In 2013, only 24 percent of adults ages 60 and older had received a shingles vaccine and only 17 percent of adults older than 19 had received a Tdap vaccine.

Are you one of the millions of adults not aware of the vaccines you need?

Each year, tens of thousands of adults needlessly suffer, are hospitalized, and even die as a result of diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. However, a recent Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) survey showed that most U.S. adults are not even aware that they need vaccines throughout their lives to protect against diseases like pertussis, hepatitis, shingles and pneumococcal disease.

Not only can vaccine-preventable diseases make you very sick, but if you get sick, you may risk spreading certain diseases to others. That’s a risk most of us do not want to take. Infants, older adults and people with weakened immune systems (like those undergoing cancer treatment) are especially vulnerable to infectious diseases. They are also more likely to have severe illness and complications if they do get sick. You can help protect your health and the health of your loved ones by getting your recommended vaccines.

The good news is that getting vaccinated is easier than you think. Adults can get vaccines at doctors’ offices, pharmacies, workplaces, health clinics and health departments. Visit vaccine.healthmap.org to help find a vaccine provider near you. Most health insurance plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines – a call to your insurance provider can give you the details.
What vaccines do you need?

All adults should get:
* Annual flu vaccine to protect against seasonal flu
* Td/Tdap to protect against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis

Some additional vaccines you may need (depending on your age, health conditions and other factors) include:
* Hepatitis A
* Hepatitis B
* Human Papillomavirus (HPV)
* Meningococcal
* Pneumococcal
* Shingles

Traveling overseas? There may be additional vaccines you need depending on the location. Find out at www.cdc.gov/travel

Not sure what vaccines you may need? The CDC offers a short quiz at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adultquiz to help you find out which vaccines you might need. You can take the results of your quiz to your provider to discuss which vaccines are right for you.

All adults should get an annual flu vaccine to protect against seasonal flu and Td/Tdap vaccine to protect against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis. You may also need other vaccines based on your age, health conditions, occupation and other factors. If you are planning to travel outside of the U.S., check on any additional vaccines you may need. Some travel-related vaccines are part of a series or are needed months prior to your travel to be most effective, so be sure to plan ahead.

For more information about adult vaccines: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults.
Your Vaccine Recommendation is a Critical Factor in Protecting Patient Health

Patients trust you to give them the best counsel on how to protect their health. You know that immunization is an important preventive measure – but it's unlikely that getting vaccinated is on the radar for your adult patients. Your strong recommendation is critical in ensuring that they get the vaccines they need to help them stay healthy.

Adults are not getting the vaccines they need. The latest data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) shows that vaccination rates for adults are extremely low (National Health Interview Survey, 2013). For example, rates for Tdap and zoster vaccination are 24 percent or less for adults who are recommended to get them. Even high risk groups are not getting the vaccines they need – only 21 percent of adults 64 years or younger who are high risk for complications from pneumococcal disease are vaccinated. This means that each year tens of thousands of adults needlessly suffer, are hospitalized, and even die as a result of diseases that could be prevented by vaccines.

Most adults don’t realize that they need vaccines. A recent national survey revealed that most adults were not aware of recommended vaccines beyond influenza.

Your patients are likely to get the vaccines you recommend to them. Clinicians are a valued and trusted source of health information for adults. Your patients rely on you to let them know which vaccines are necessary and right for them.

“Since adults aren’t thinking about vaccines, we need ALL health care professionals to use every patient encounter as an opportunity to assess whether any vaccines are needed,” Dr. Anne Schuchat, director of CDC’s National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

If the patient is due for a vaccine, make a strong recommendation that you advise getting the vaccine because it can help protect them against a disease that could be serious. For some patients, this may be sufficient information to accept the vaccine. Others may want to learn more about the vaccine and why it is right for them. For these patients, sharing the following can help them make an informed decision.

- Share the tailored reasons why the recommended vaccine is right for the patient, given his or her age, health status, lifestyle, job, or other risk factors.
• **Highlight** positive experiences with vaccines (personal or in your practice) to reinforce the benefits and strengthen confidence in vaccination.

• **Address** patient questions and any concerns about the vaccine, including side effects safety, and vaccine effectiveness in plain and understandable language.

• **Remind** patients that vaccines protect them and their loved ones from many common and serious diseases.

• **Explain** the potential costs of getting vaccine-preventable diseases, including serious health effects, time lost (missing work or family obligations), and financial costs.

Some patients may need additional time to consider information about vaccines or want more details than can be provided during a single office visit. There are a number of things you can do to help these patients stay on track with recommended vaccinations.

• Provide educational materials or trusted websites for them to review.

• Send reminders about needed vaccines.

• Document the conversation and continue the discussion at the next visit.

To download free patient education materials or find resources on addressing patient questions and concerns about adult vaccines, visit: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults).

*August is National Immunization Awareness Month – a reminder of the importance of immunization in keeping our communities healthy. Your strong recommendation can make a difference.*
Immunity Protects All of Us:
Don’t Wait. Vaccinate!

In the United States, vaccines have greatly reduced infectious diseases that once routinely killed or harmed many infants, children, and adults. However, the viruses and bacteria that cause vaccine-preventable disease still exist and can be passed on to people who are not protected by vaccines. Every year, thousands of Americans still suffer serious health problems, are hospitalized, and even die from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. Protect your health and the health of your family. Make sure you and your loved ones are up-to-date on recommended vaccines.

Here’s why you shouldn’t wait:

- Many vaccine-preventable diseases are still common in the U.S.
- Those that are not common here are still found in other parts of the world, and can still be a threat.
- Some of these diseases are very contagious.
- Any of these diseases could be serious – even for healthy people.
- Certain people may be at higher risk for getting some diseases or having more serious illness if they were to get sick, like young children, older adults, and those with health conditions.

Vaccines are our best protection against a number of serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases. Every year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other medical experts update vaccine recommendations for children, teens, and adults based on the latest research and evidence-based science on vaccine safety, effectiveness, and patterns of vaccine-preventable diseases.

You have the power to protect yourself and the ones you love. Talk to your healthcare professional about which vaccines are right for you and your family.
Getting Vaccinated
Most private health insurance plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program helps provide vaccines to children whose parents or guardians may not be able to afford them. Medicare and Medicaid also cover a number of vaccines for adults. Vaccines are available at private doctor offices, as well as other convenient locations such as pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, and health departments.

To learn more about vaccines and take a quick quiz to find out which vaccines you may need, visit: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults
Facebook Posts

*Here are sample Facebook posts of 250 characters or less to allow the entire post to be viewed in the newsfeed. Check Web Links & Resources for more ideas of links you can use to enliven your social media messages.*

If you have a chronic condition such as asthma, diabetes, or heart disease, getting sick with vaccine-preventable diseases like flu and pneumonia can lead to serious complications, hospitalization or even death. Protect yourself – get vaccinated.

Adults need vaccines, too. We all need protection from the serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases that can be prevented by vaccines. Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or other health care professional which vaccines are recommended for you.

Vaccines aren’t just for children. Help protect yourself and your family from disease by getting vaccinated. Ask your doctor, pharmacist, or other health care professional which vaccines are recommended for you.

Do you know which vaccines you need? Here’s a hint: All adults should be vaccinated against flu and tetanus. Ask your doctor which other vaccines are recommended for you. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adultquiz](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adultquiz)

Some things you outgrow as an adult. Immunizations aren’t one of them. Talk to your health care provider, your public health department, or visit [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines) to find out which immunizations you might need.

If you’re not up to date with your vaccines, you’re vulnerable to a number of serious diseases like flu, hepatitis and pneumococcal disease. These diseases can be serious, even deadly – but they can be prevented with vaccines.

Do your fall and winter plans include nausea, fever, muscle aches and fatigue? If not, visit your health care professional, public health department or local pharmacy and get a flu vaccine. The influenza vaccine is recommended for all adults – especially those 65 years and older, pregnant women, and those with health conditions like asthma, diabetes and heart disease.

Whooping cough can cause serious, sometimes even fatal, complications in infants and young children. Protect your children by making sure you and anyone who spends time around them, are up to date on your whooping cough vaccine.

When you’re making your back-to-school checklist, make sure to include vaccines—for your children and for yourself. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)
Did you know you need vaccines throughout your life? Even if you were fully vaccinated as a child, the protection from some vaccines you received can wear off over time and you may need a booster. There also are specific vaccines that you may need as you get older based on your age, job, lifestyle, travel, or health conditions. Take this CDC quiz to find out which vaccines are right for you: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz

You have the power to protect yourself and the ones you love. Talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional about which vaccines are right for you and your family.

Are you and your family up-to-date on your vaccines? Talk to your doctor or other healthcare professional to make sure you and your family get the vaccines you need.
Tweets

Here are sample Twitter messages. Use 120 characters or less to allow room for a shortened URL and hashtag – #NIAM15 for National Immunization Awareness Month. Check the Web Links & Resources for more ideas you can use to enliven your social media messages.

General Tweets
Vaccines protect all of us from serious diseases. Get vaccinated today to protect yourself and your family. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

Is your family up-to-date on vaccines? Talk to your doctor to make sure you all get the vaccines you need.

Is your family up-to-date on vaccines? Talk to your doctor to make sure both you and your children get the vaccines they need.

Getting vaccinated also helps protect those most at risk for complications, like infants and older adults. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

Have you received all the vaccines you need? Take the CDC quiz to find out: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz)

Is your family going on a trip? Make sure vaccines are on your travel checklist. Learn more: [www.cdc.gov/travel](http://www.cdc.gov/travel)

It’s back-to-school time! Has your family received all the vaccines they need? [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

Vaccines are recommended throughout our lives. Take CDC quiz to find out which vaccines you may need. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz)

It’s Nat’l Immunization Awareness Month, a great time to make sure your family is up-to-date on vaccines. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

A Tdap shot during pregnancy protects you and gives your baby short-term protection from whooping cough. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

When you make your back-to-school checklist, be sure to include vaccines—for your children & for yourself. [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)

Set an example of good health for your family by getting vaccines you need. Talk to your doc and make sure you’re up-to-date.

You have the power to protect yourself & loved ones. Talk to your doc about vaccines for you & your family.
**Adult vaccination**
Vaccination is our best defense against some still common & sometimes deadly diseases.

Immunizations are NOT just for children! No matter your age, we ALL need immunizations to keep us healthy.

Adults need vaccines, too. Vaccination is an important step in staying healthy.

Help keep yourself & your family healthy. Find out which vaccines you may need. [www.cdc.gov/Features/adultimmunizations/](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/adultimmunizations/)

Too few adults are getting the vaccinations needed to help prevent diseases. Protect yourself and your loved ones.

Adult vaccines are available in many places, including doctor's offices, health departments & pharmacies.

The vaccine finder helps you find places to get vaccinated near you: [http://vaccine.healthmap.org/](http://vaccine.healthmap.org/)

Diseases like whooping cough still exist & outbreaks still happen, even in the U.S.

What vaccines do you need? Take this CDC quiz to find out: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz)

Need help keeping track of or finding your adult vaccination record? [www.cdc.gov/Features/AdultVaccinationRecords/](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/AdultVaccinationRecords/)

Got questions about vaccines? Find easy-to-read 1-pagers @ImmunizeAction: [http://www.immunize.org/handouts/](http://www.immunize.org/handouts/)

**Safety**
Vaccines are very safe. CDC & FDA hold vaccines to the highest safety standards and monitor them after they are licensed.

U.S. has the safest, most effective vaccine supply in its history. Millions of people are safely vaccinated each year.

**Immunization schedule**
Every year medical experts review the schedule of recommended adult vaccines. See 2015 schedule: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/adult.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/adult.html)

Vaccine recommendations translate scientific research into best ways to protect you & family from diseases.
**Special health conditions**
Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious for people w/ chronic disease: asthma, diabetes, heart or lung conditions.

For people w/ chronic disease, vaccine-preventable diseases may cause complications leading to severe illness, even death.

Do you have a chronic condition? Take this CDC quiz to see which vaccines may be recommended for you specifically: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz)

**Pregnant women**
For information about vaccines for women before, during & after pregnancy, see [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/pregnant.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/pregnant.html)

Pregnant women should be current with all recommended vaccines to protect them & their newborns.

**Health care workers**
Health care workers are at increased risk for getting & spreading vaccine-preventable diseases.

Health care workers need to be immunized against flu, hepatitis B, measles, mumps, rubella, pertussis, & chickenpox.

**Shingles**
Almost 1 out of 3 people in America will develop shingles in their lifetime. Risk increases as you get older. People 60 years or older should get the shingles vaccine.

Nearly 1 million Americans experience shingles each year. Anyone who has had chickenpox in the past can get shingles.

**Pneumococcal Disease**
All adults 65 & older should get pneumococcal vaccine. 19-64 yr olds at high risk for pneumonia should get it too.

Medicare covers flu and pneumococcal vaccines with no co-pay or deductible.
**Pertussis (Whooping Cough)**
Adults are often the source of whooping cough infection in babies, which can be deadly. Get vaccinated!

Vaccine protection can fade. Adults 19 and older need Tdap vaccine for whooping cough if they did not get it as a teen.

Anyone who will be around a newborn needs to be up to date with Tdap vaccine to help protect against whooping cough.

Women should get a whooping cough vaccine during every pregnancy, preferably during the 3rd trimester.

**Influenza**
CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first & most important step in protecting against flu viruses

Everyone 6 months of age and older should get an annual flu vaccine, even if vaccinated last season.

Millions of people have safely received influenza vaccines for decades. Get a flu vaccine for yourself and your family.

Anyone can get sick with #flu, but certain people are at high risk for serious complications if they get the flu. [http://1.usa.gov/1enjDvN](http://1.usa.gov/1enjDvN)

Healthcare Professionals: Protect yourself, your family, co-workers and patients from the flu by getting a yearly flu vaccine.

**Travel vaccinations**
Plan to travel soon? Check which vaccines are recommended or required for travel. [www.cdc.gov/Features/TravelProtection/](http://www.cdc.gov/Features/TravelProtection/)
Web Links & Resources

**CDC: Adult Vaccination Homepage for Adults**
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/index.html

**CDC: Adult Vaccination Resources for HCPs**
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults

**CDC: Adult Vaccination Resources for Partners**
http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/for-partners

**CDC: Adolescent and Adult Vaccine Quiz**
Take CDC’s quiz to find out which vaccines are recommended for you:
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/AdultQuiz

**CDC: Recommended Vaccines for Adults**
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/index.html

**CDC: Finding and Paying for Vaccines**
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adult/find-pay-vaccines.html

**CDC: Influenza (Flu) Resources**
www.cdc.gov/flu/

**CDC: Easy-to-Read Adult Immunization Schedule (PDF) – English & Spanish**
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/adult.html

**CDC: VSI (Vaccine Scene Investigation) – Video**
Fun and informative short video about “crimes of diseases” for older adults (close captioned for the deaf and hearing impaired)
http://streaming.cdc.gov/vod.php?id=bc4ea520d308431381d44a5e8cbfa9af20100812135645473

**CDC: Adult Vaccination - Podcasts**
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/resources/audio.html

**Healthmap Vaccine Finder**
Locate vaccines near you
http://vaccine.healthmap.org
Vaccine Information for Specific Groups

**CDC: Older Adults (Age 60+)**  

**CDC: Adults with Special Health Conditions**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/health-conditions.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/health-conditions.html)

**CDC: Healthcare Workers**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/hcw.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/hcw.html)

**CDC: Travelers**  

**CDC: Spanish – Adult Vaccine Resources**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/resources.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/resources.html)

**CDC: Vaccines for Pregnant Women**  
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/pregnant.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/rec-vac/pregnant.html)

Resources for Clinicians and Advocates

**CDC: Resources for Educating Adult Patients about Vaccines**  

**Immunization Action Coalition**  
[www.vaccineinformation.org](http://www.vaccineinformation.org) (public)  
[www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org) (clinicians/coalitions)  
Here you will find a collection of videos, testimonials and resources for consumers, clinicians and coalitions, plus easy-to-read informational flyers in plain English and many languages.

**Vaccinate Adults** is a new publication for health care providers:  
[www.immunize.org/va/](http://www.immunize.org/va/)

**National Foundation for Infectious Diseases**  
[www.adultvaccination.org](http://www.adultvaccination.org)  
Here you will find lots of information, ‘10 Reasons To Be Vaccinated’, radio PSAs, testimonials and video PSAs, including ‘Are You That Guy?’ (about the flu).

**ACOG: Immunization Toolkit**  
[www.immunizationforwomen.org](http://www.immunizationforwomen.org)