Adult Immunization Schedule, CDC

VACCINES FOR ADULTS INCLUDE:

- **Tetanus-Diphtheria Vaccine** should be given every 10 years. One is needed every 5 years if there is an injury or open wound. You need a series of three shots to be fully vaccinated with Td vaccine.
- **Influenza (Flu) Vaccine** is recommended for all people over 50 years of age. It may be required depending on social living conditions. It may be required earlier with certain risk factors. Nursing homes may require this vaccine at any age.
- **Pneumococcal Vaccine** is recommended for people over 65 years of age, people who live in a nursing home and have not been previously vaccinated, and people 2 years old and older who have chronic health conditions other than asthma. These include diabetes, heart or lung disease, cancer, kidney failure, liver disease, removed or dysfunctional spleen, and HIV/AIDS. This vaccine is also recommended for people who are members of a community with high rates of pneumococcal infection such as Alaska natives and certain Native American populations.
- **Hepatitis B Vaccine** is recommended for adults at risk due to travel outside the country. All medical personnel who may be exposed to blood products must be immunized. Hepatitis B is a serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the liver. The virus, which is called hepatitis B virus (HBV), can cause lifelong infection, cirrhosis (scarring) of the liver, liver cancer, liver failure, and death. Hepatitis B vaccine is available for all age groups to prevent hepatitis B virus infection. Usually you will need 3 shots to complete the series.
- **Measles-Mumps-Rubella (MMR)** Vaccine is recommended for adults at risk due to travel outside the country or if you were born after Jan. 1, 1957. Some nursing homes may require an MMR.
- **Varicella (chicken pox)** Vaccine is recommended for those who have never had chicken pox or have not been vaccinated against chicken pox especially:
  - Anyone 11 to 18 years of age.
  - College students.
  - Women of child-bearing age who are **not** pregnant.
  - Health care workers.
  - International travelers.
- **Cholera Vaccine** is recommended before travel to some countries.
- **Yellow Fever Vaccine** is recommended before travel to countries where Yellow Fever is common.
- **Vaccines for travelers** see www.cdc.gov/travel/index.htm for specifics.

ABOUT FLU

Influenza (commonly called “the flu”) is a contagious respiratory illness. It is caused by influenza viruses. Infection with influenza viruses can result in illness ranging from mild to severe and life-threatening complications.

SYMPTOMS OF FLU

Symptoms of flu include:

- Fever (usually high).
- Headache.
- Extreme tiredness. Gastro-intestinal symptoms (more common among children than adults) such as:
  - Nausea.
  - Vomiting.
  - Diarrhea.
- Sore throat.
- Runny or stuffy nose.
- Muscle aches.
- Dry cough.

HOW FLU SPREADS

Influenza viruses are spread from person to person in respiratory droplets of coughs and sneezes. This can happen when droplets from a cough or sneeze of an infected person are propelled up to 3 feet through the air. Then they are deposited on the mouth or nose of people nearby. Though less frequent, the viruses also can be spread when a person touches respiratory droplets on another person or an object and then touches their own mouth or nose (or someone else's mouth or nose) before washing his/her hands.

Scientific studies show that adults can spread the virus from 1 day before developing symptoms to up to 7 days after getting sick. Young children can spread the virus for longer than 7 days. However, more virus is spread earlier in the illness than later.

PREVENTION OF FLU

- **Vaccination.** The single best way to prevent the flu is to get vaccinated each fall. However, in the absence of vaccine, there are other ways to protect against flu.
- **Antiviral Medications**. Three antiviral drugs (amantadine, rimantadine, and oseltamivir) are approved and commercially available for use in preventing flu. All of these medications are prescription drugs. A caregiver should be consulted before the drugs are used for preventing the flu.

OTHER HABITS FOR GOOD HEALTH

The following steps may help prevent the spread of respiratory illnesses like flu:

- Avoid close contact with large numbers of people during the flu season.
- Avoid close contact with people who are sick. When you are sick, keep your distance from others to protect them from getting sick too. Wear a face mask.
- If possible, stay home from work, school, and errands when you are sick. You will help prevent others from catching your illness.
- Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when coughing or sneezing. It may prevent those around you from getting sick.
- Clean your hands frequently. Washing your hands often will help protect you from germs.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose, or mouth. Germs are often spread when a person touches something that is contaminated with germs and then touches his/her eyes, nose, or mouth.

DIAGNOSING THE FLU

Tests are available that can determine if you have the flu as long as you are tested within the first 2 or 3 days after your symptoms begin. A caregiver's examination may also be needed. This is to determine whether a person has another infection that is a complication of the flu.

AT SPECIAL RISK OF COMPLICATIONS FROM FLU

Certain people are at increased risk for serious complications from the flu. This group includes people age 65 years and older. This also includes people of any age with chronic medical conditions such as:

- Heart, lung, or kidney disease.
- Asthma.
- Diabetes.
- Cardiovascular disease.
- HIV/AIDS.
- Persons undergoing therapies that suppress the immune system.

COMPLICATIONS FROM FLU

Some of the complications caused by flu include:

- Bacterial pneumonia.
- Dehydration.
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions, such as congestive heart failure, asthma, or diabetes.

If you have an allergy to eggs, discuss your allergy with your caregiver and ask for advice about getting a flu shot.

TREATING THE FLU

A number of antiviral medications are approved for treatment of the flu. All of these must be prescribed by your caregiver. Antiviral treatment generally should be started within the first 2 days of illness.

WHAT TO DO IF YOU GET SICK THIS FLU SEASON

If you develop the flu:

- Get plenty of rest.
- Drink a lot of liquids.
- Avoid using alcohol and tobacco.
- Take medications to relieve the symptoms of flu if advised by your caregiver.
- If your flu symptoms are severe (for example, if you are having trouble breathing), consult your caregiver right away.

If you are at special risk from complications of flu, consult your caregiver when your flu symptoms begin. This includes people 65 years or older, people with chronic medical conditions, pregnant women, or children. Your caregiver may choose to use certain antiviral drugs to treat the flu.

MUMPS

Mumps is a viral disease that affects the salivary or parotid glands. It causes:

- Fever.
- Headache.
- Muscle ache.
- Swelling of the lymph nodes close to the jaw.

Complications of mumps are:

- Meningitis.
- Inflammation of the testicles or ovaries.
- Inflammation of the pancreas.
- Deafness.

It is spread by coughing and sneezing. It is about as contagious as influenza and rubella, but less so than measles or chickenpox. It is generally transmitted from about 3 days before symptoms appear to about 4 days after. The virus has been isolated from saliva as early as 7 days before to as late as 9 days after onset of symptoms. The virus replicates in the nasopharynx and lymph nodes of the infected person. Transmission is airborne or through direct contact with infected droplets or saliva.

As an adult, you do NOT need the measles, mumps, rubella vaccine (MMR) if:

- You had blood tests that show you are immune to measles, mumps, and rubella.
- You are a man born before 1957.
- You are a woman born before 1957 who is sure she is not having more children, has already had rubella vaccine, or has had a positive rubella test.
- You already had two doses of MMR or one dose of MMR plus a second dose of measles vaccine.
- You already had one dose of MMR and are not at high risk of measles exposure.

As an adult, you SHOULD get the measles vaccine if you are not among the categories listed above, and

- You are a college student.
- You work in a hospital or other medical facility.
- You travel internationally or are a passenger on a cruise ship.
- You are a woman of childbearing age.

Some adults incorrectly assume that the vaccines they received as children will protect them for the rest of their lives. Generally this is true, except that:

- Some adults were never vaccinated as children.
- Newer vaccines were not available when some adults were children.
- Immunity can begin to fade over time.
- As we age, we become more susceptible to serious disease caused by common infections.

(Center for Disease Control and Prevention) may be obtained on the web at www.cdc.gov.

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