August is National Immunization Awareness Month

How well have you maintained your health with routine vaccinations? August is National Immunization Awareness Month, making it a great opportunity to remind communities to receive any vaccinations that prevent their health from being at risk of harmful illnesses and diseases. Flu season is right around the corner, and it is important to make sure that we take these precautions. Especially for individuals who may have pre-existing health conditions or other factors that may contribute to a weaker immune system.

Why You Should Get Routine Vaccines

Some people may be wondering why they should be given another vaccine against a disease, such as the flu, that they have already been vaccinated for. This is due to the constantly evolving antigens in diseases that eventually cause the vaccine that someone may have taken a year prior to not provide the same level of immunity as it did before. If that is the case, then your body may be due for another vaccination soon. Antigens are constantly replicating and mutating to create different variations
of the disease. A vaccine works by injecting someone with a small dose of antigens from a disease or virus, so the body can learn how to create antibodies that prove effective against those specific antigens. Recent studies have shown that annual vaccines have reduced the likeliness of the flu illness by upwards of 40-60% among the global overall population.

It may seem quite daunting to have to keep track of which vaccines you have already taken and how it has been since you have taken them. The Center for Disease Control (CDC) provides an Adult Immunization Sheet that includes recommended treatment schedules for diseases such as measles and hepatitis.

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**Fact #1: Vaccines Prevent Millions of Deaths**

Timely vaccinations are known to prevent between 2-3 million deaths annually from diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis and measles.

**Fact #2: There are 12 Recommended Vaccines**

Vaccinations are recommended for adults, especially those who need boosters or are traveling overseas. Some you need every year - like the flu vaccine - and others only once, like the chickenpox vaccine.

**Fact #3: Vaccines Stimulate Your Immune System**

Just like if you were exposed to the disease, the vaccine you receive for specific diseases stimulates your immune system in order to create antibodies. These antibodies are what protect you and offer immunity without having to get the disease itself.

**Fact #4: You Can Locate Your Vaccine Record**

While there isn't a national vaccination records registry, you can do some detective work to track down your records. Doing so can reduce the chances you are vaccinated twice for the same health concern. Check with your parents for childhood records, public health clinics, or your state's health department.

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**The Safety & Reliability of Vaccines**

Vaccinations have done well at lessening the severity or even eliminating diseases like polio and smallpox from the United States. The most recent and notable example of a vaccine working against a serious illness was the COVID-19 vaccine which had been provided by well-known pharmaceutical companies such as Pfizer and Moderna. There are only small differences between vaccines which are provided by different companies but are meant to do the same job. These differences may be related to varying side effects or age recommendations for the vaccine.
There are many Americans who question the safety and reliability behind different vaccines and treatments that are clinically tested and proven to protect our health. These concerns may involve some of the more serious side-effects that are cautioned or not understanding the processes involved in making sure a vaccine is ready for public use.

Here are some related facts that could help to answer many questions or concerns regarding the reliability and safety of vaccines:

- **FDA (Food & Drug Administration) evaluation**: Vaccines undergo a rigorous FDA evaluation of laboratory and clinical data to ensure their safety, effectiveness, and manufacturing quality.
- **Side-effects are rare**: Like any medicine, there are potential side-effects with vaccines, such as redness or swelling at the injection site. But more serious, adverse effects due to vaccines are extremely rare. Make sure to consult your doctor first if you feel concerned about the possibility of side-effects.
- **Statistics related to the effectiveness of vaccines**: A 2021 study showed that among adults hospitalized with the flu, vaccinated patients had a 26% lower risk of intensive care unit (ICU) admission and a 31% lower risk of death from flu compared with those who were unvaccinated. A 2022 study showed that flu vaccinations reduced children’s risk of severe, life-threatening influenza by 75%.

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**Sources/For More Info:**

- [World Health Organization](https://www.who.int)
- [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](https://www.cdc.gov)
- [California Department of Public Health](https://www.cdph.ca.gov)
- [San Bernardino County Public Health](https://www.sbcountyhealth.org)

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**Health Observances**
Throughout the year, there are countless health observances that raise awareness for a variety of conditions (both big and small) and remind consumers to be proactive and stay on top of their health.

**Month-Long Observances:**
- **Children’s Eye Health and Safety Month**
- **Digestive Tract Paralysis Awareness Month**
- **Gastroparesis Awareness Month**
- **National Breastfeeding Month**
- **Psoriasis Action Month**

**Weeks to Note:**
- August 1-7: [World Breastfeeding Week](https://www.worldbreastfeeding.org)
- August 6-12: [National Health Center Week](https://www.nhcweek.org)
- August 14-20: [OSHA’s Safe and Sound Week](https://www.osha.gov)
- August 20-26: [Contact Lens Health Week](https://www.healthycontacts.com)

**Days to Note:**
Veggie Tortilla Roll-Ups

What You Need:

- 4 (7-inch) whole wheat tortillas
- 8 tablespoons nonfat cream cheese
- 2 cups shredded romaine lettuce or fresh chopped spinach
- 1 cup chopped tomato
- 1/2 cup chopped bell pepper (red, green, orange, yellow or a mixture)
- 1/2 cup chopped cucumber
- 1/4 cup diced canned green chilies
- salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
- 1/4 cup sliced ripe olives, drained

To Make:

1. Mix vegetables together in a bowl.
2. Spread each tortilla with 2 tablespoons of cream cheese.
3. Top with equal amounts of vegetables.
4. Roll up tightly to enclose filling and serve.

Did you know...?

Leafy greens, such as lettuce and spinach are an excellent source of fiber, iron, calcium, and vitamins C and K. They are also known to play a critical role in regulating the immune system.

Leafy greens can be prepared in many ways including this month's recipe as well as a multitude of other dishes.

More info on leafy greens here

Upcoming Events**

** Times/Locations Subject to Change **
** Cancellations may also apply if inclement weather **

Visit the Healthy Fontana booth at one (or all) of these upcoming events for FREE resources and giveaways!

- **Thursdays, August 3rd, 10th, 17th, 24th & 31st:** Fontana Farmers' Market, 4pm-7:30pm, Southridge Park (Don Day Center Parking Lot)
- **Sundays, August 6th, 13th, 20th & 27th:** Fontana Farmers' Market, 10am-3pm, Fontana Park
Looking for ways to be more active, but don't know how or have the resources?

The Healthy Fontana team is here to support you and help provide you with resources on how to be a healthier version of yourself. For more information about Healthy Fontana or the programs available to you, visit the Healthy Fontana website or connect with us via one of the ways below!

Connect with Healthy Fontana
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