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PEDIATRIC PIPELINE

VOLUME 34, NUMBER 3

FALL 2018

Influenza (Flu) Vaccine Information

This year we are again offering our patients and families **several options** to receive their flu vaccine.

First, it can be given during a **regularly scheduled office visit**, but not a vaccine only visit, starting September 1. **We will also offer the vaccine to any family member (including adults) present at that visit!**

Second, we will again have our popular **Wednesday evening flu clinics**, on **September 12 and 26, and October 17**. Parents are invited too.

Finally, we will have **Thursday afternoon flu clinics** starting September 13, and running through November. Parents can also attend.

For all flu clinics, patients must have an appointment. We will not accept walk-ins. Also, we will not perform any other services during

the clinics. Since some children need two vaccines, please schedule accordingly and take into consideration any prescheduled office visits. Despite large numbers, our clinics run smoothly with minimal waiting. Please come at your appointed times. Since it is crowded, please keep your children under control at all times.

Influenza (flu) is a viral illness that causes a significant fever, chills, cough, and muscle aches. It can last as long as a week. More serious complications are possible. It appears every winter, some years worse than others.

The **flu vaccine** can prevent influenza, or at least lessen its severity. It contains strains of influenza which are most likely to occur this winter. It does not prevent against all types of flu or other illnesses that resemble flu.

This year, we will only be

giving the flu shot. The nasal flu vaccine is not recommended because it is not as effective against this year's strain of influenza. There is a thimerosal-free shot for children 6 months to 3 years of age, and there is a 3 and over shot.

It is recommended that all persons over 6 months of age receive a flu vaccine. Those under age 9 years, who have not received at least two flu vaccines in the past, need two vaccines spaced four weeks apart. Everyone else just needs one vaccine.

Parents receiving the flu vaccine at our office will be charged \$35 and must be paid at the time of service. A receipt for insurance will be provided. We submit our patients' charges to their insurance, and only bill for any copay or coinsurance that is required.

A Letter to Those Who Choose Not to Get Flu Shots

Some of you choose to not protect your child with a flu vaccine. Please take a moment to read why this decision may not be in your child's best interest.

- You have vaccinated your child against all of the other deadly diseases for which we have an available vaccine; however, influenza kills more children each year than all of the other diseases combined in this country. Last year, more children died from the flu than in any other year in our recent US history.
- Some say they do not vaccinate because they have not done so in the past. Then, so far, you have been lucky. Would you have your child ride in, or drive, a car without a seat belt or restraint because so far they have not been in a crash?
- Some say that the flu vaccine made them sick in the past, which is not possible. The shot has no live virus and therefore cannot give you the flu. It is the safest of all vaccines. People get sick all the time and sometimes it coincidentally occurs the day after a vaccination.

One of these years, a catastrophic strain of influenza will reappear. In the 1917-18 flu pandemic, one-third of the world's population was infected and more than 50 million people died—including 675,000 Americans. Those who received an early type of vaccine that was available at the time survived. More recently, the deadly impact of the 2009 H1N1 pandemic was lessened because of early identification and intervention, and most important, increased vaccination rates.

Given the potential dire consequences, why would you take a chance with your child? Every reputable world health organization recommends it. Be wise. Protect your most precious loved ones.

Juuling

Although cigarette smoking has declined in teens over the past seven years, there has been an enormous increase in the use of electronic nicotine delivery systems, such as JUUL and PHIX. Both have flavored products that lure teens. Teens are also lured by the design -- they look like flash drives and can be customized, as well as easily concealed. They may create an energy boost, as well as a calming effect, both attractive to teens.

Despite what the salespeople will tell teens, these products are dangerous. Health risks include:

- Nicotine addiction, reduced lung function, reduced lung growth, early cardiovascular damage, and adverse effects on brain development.
- In addition, cancer causing agents are routinely found in these products.
- Nicotine exposure in undeveloped brains (including teens) can lead to reduction in focus, attention, and impulse control, as well as cognitive and mood disorders.

This and That

Drs. Rabinowitz, Quaife, and Venters will be attending this year's American Academy of Pediatrics' Annual Meeting in Orlando this fall. **Dr. Rabinowitz** will be one of the speakers.

Our office is closed on **Labor Day (September 3)** but, as always, a Pediatrician is on call.

Parker Pediatrics and Adolescents is now in it's **37th year** of existence. We now have former patients who are AARP members!

Once again, our practice has been chosen as **Best of the Best for Pediatricians in Parker** by the Parker Chronicle. We thank all of our loyal patients, and appreciate this honor.

We want to remind parents that home **carbon monoxide detectors** should be checked and batteries should be changed as we approach the colder seasons.

Follow us on **Facebook, Instagram, and Pinterest.**

With school in session, we will see a rise in two areas: **1. Infections/illnesses.** We do guarantee same day visits if you call by 2:30 that same day. **2. Mental health issues.** We do have our own mental/behavioral health specialists and can see our patients for this in the office.

Concerned about your child's weight? **Tracy Stam** is our **Registered Dietitian** and sees patients for dietary counseling by appointment.

“Quotable Quotes”

The following conversations occurred in our office:

Provider: “Good news -- No shots today.”

Five-year-old: “Yep. It's not a shot day for my body.”

Provider: “Did you go anywhere this summer?”

11-year-old: “Nah.”

Mom: “What about our three week trip to Europe!”

11-year-old: “Oh, yeah. I forgot.”

Provider: “What's your favorite fruit?”

Four-year-old: “Cake.”

Provider: “What position do you play?”

15-year-old: “Shortstop, but since I'm tall, it's tall stop.”

If you enjoy these quotes, you can purchase Dr. Rabinowitz's book, [*Cute Kidbits: Funny Conversations Kids Share With Their Pediatrician*](#), on Amazon or at our office.

Tackle Football —What To Do?

Parents ask us frequently about the risks of children playing tackle football at young ages. The studies all seem to suggest that repeated head impacts before age 12 can lead to a greater risk for both short- and long-term neurological consequences. Also, studies show that those who played tackle football before age 12 later experience mood and behavioral problems at a higher rate than those who do not.

Nationwide, youth football participation is declining due to safety concerns. Parents should measure the pros and cons of youth participation, and consider flag football, as well as one of the many other sports available. Of course, recurrent head injuries from any sport should lead parents to consider switching their child to another, less contact, sport. We have had many patients switch sports due to an injury, only to find out they became superstars at the new sport! One never knows what sport a child may excel at unless they get to experience multiple ones!