

ONEIDA COUNTY HEALTH DEPARTMENT

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News Release

August 7, 2015
For Immediate Release

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August is Immunization Awareness Month

During the month of August, as the new school year approaches and the flu season emerges around the corner, the Oneida County Health Department reminds everyone that their immunizations should be up-to-date.

“August is National Immunization Awareness Month when parents and students should remember that by staying up-to-date with recommended vaccinations you can protect yourself from serious, sometimes life-threatening diseases,” Phyllis Ellis, Director of the Oneida County Health Department said. She added, “Getting immunized is a life-long, life-protecting effort regardless of age, sex, race or ethnic background. Recommended vaccinations begin at birth and continue throughout life.”

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the benefits of immunization for people of all ages are among the most significant public health achievements of our time. Vaccines have eradicated small pox, eliminated poliovirus in the United States and significantly reduced the incidence of measles, rubella, pertussis and other diseases.

Ellis emphasized that immunity provided by many vaccines wanes with age making it necessary to repeat or receive a ‘booster’ in many cases. “We recommend that adolescents and adults 11 to 64 years of age receive a Tdap shot to boost their immunity for pertussis, particularly if they have regular contact with infants.”

Most adults should receive an annual flu vaccine and older adults, especially those with chronic respiratory conditions, should consider a pneumonia vaccine. For anyone who had chicken pox during childhood, the potential for shingles increases as we age so they might want to discuss the shingles vaccine with their primary health care provider.

According to Ellis, infants and young children are particularly vulnerable to infection, so it’s important that parents make sure their children are properly immunized from birth to four years of age when most vaccines are administered. “Parents are encouraged to be mindful of their children’s immunization schedules. If you think your child is lacking a vaccine call your health care provider,” Ellis said.

For more information on immunizations or for a complete schedule of immunization clinics, call the Oneida County Health Department at 798-5747 or visit our website at www.ocgov.net/oneida/health.

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