

New York State Academy of Family Physicians together with

New York State Physicians and Public Health Officials Launch “IMMUNIZE NY”

Vaccine Preventable Diseases are on the Rise in this Country Due to Lack of Immunization

Many New Yorkers are Missing Opportunities to Stay Healthy through Vaccinations

ALBANY, NY, September XX —The World Health Organization estimates that vaccination prevents 2.5 million deaths each year. In an effort to address the rise of preventable diseases due to lack of immunization, the New York State Academy of Family Physicians (NYSAFP) have joined with other New York State Physicians and public health officials to launch a new program to encourage New Yorkers to be vigilant in keeping their immunizations up-to-date.

"Immunization is a win, win for public health and public health budgets, now is the time to encourage New Yorkers of all ages to be vaccinated," stated Dr. Mark Josefski, President of the NYSAFP.

NYSAFP along with the Medical Society of the State of New York, New York Chapter of the American College of Physicians, the New York State Chapter of Academy of Family Physicians and the New York State Association of County Health Officials have launched “IMMUNIZE NY” to promote immunizations within the adult population. The campaign strongly encourages adults to discuss immunizations with their physicians and to ask specifically about pertussis, influenza, pneumococcal, HPV and shingles vaccinations.

“Many adolescents and adults are under-immunized and are missing opportunities to protect themselves against diseases such as HPV, influenza, shingles, pertussis and pneumococcal disease,” said MSSNY’s William Valenti, MD. “That is why we, as physicians, are encouraging all adults to speak with their physicians about immunizing them against these diseases. Not only do adults need to be immunized for these diseases, they need to ensure that they have received the necessary ‘booster’ shots to continue their immunity.”

Preventing diseases through vaccine is one of the five public health priorities for the New York State Department of Health. The Affordable Care Act’s prevention provisions now cover vaccines that are recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) with no co-payments or other cost-sharing requirements when those services are delivered by an in-network provider.

“Every year in the U.S., on average, 5% to 20% of the population gets the flu, more than 200,000 people are hospitalized from complications and, about 23,500 people die from seasonal flu. In some years, there are as many as 48,000 deaths”, said Lawrence Eisenstein, MD, FACP, director of the Disease Control Committee of the New York State Association of County Health Officials and Commissioner of Health in Nassau County.

Vaccines have brought a dramatic reduction of new cases of infectious diseases and their devastating effect over the last 100 years. However, vaccine preventable

diseases, such as measles, mumps, and whooping cough are on the rise in this country due to lack of immunization. “Whooping cough or pertussis is a highly contagious respiratory tract infection caused by bacteria and is on the rise in this country and state,” said Mark Josefski, MD, FAAFP of the NYS Academy of Family Physicians. “Many older New Yorkers are susceptible to whooping cough and once they have it, they can transmit the disease to their grandchildren who have not yet been immunized.”

The importance of vaccines begins in infancy and continues right through adulthood. “A vaccine stimulates your immune system to produce antibodies, exactly like it would if you were exposed to the disease. After getting vaccinated, you develop immunity to that disease, without having to get the disease first,” said Andrew Dunn, MD, FACP, president of the New York Chapter of the American College of Physicians. “Vaccines are powerful medications. Unlike most medicines, which treat diseases, vaccines *prevent* them.”

The IMMUNIZE NY Campaign will be added to each organization’s website and will be highlighted throughout the fall. NYSAFP, The Medical Society of the State of New York, the New York Chapter of American College of Physicians, and the NYS Association of the County Health Officials supports the New York State’s Prevention Agenda 2013-17, the blueprint for state and local action to improve the health of New Yorkers in five priority areas and to reduce health disparities for racial, ethnic, disability, socioeconomic and other groups who experience them.

BACKGROUND INFO AND RESEARCH:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/measles/cases-outbreaks.html>

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-managers/coverage/nis/adult/index.html>

<http://www.vaccines.gov/basics/>

https://www.health.ny.gov/prevention/prevention_agenda/2013-2017/plan/stds/