



NEWS RELEASE

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ADULTS AND IMMUNIZATIONS –SOME THINGS YOU NEVER OUTGROW

(Salt Lake City, UT) – Many people mistakenly believe that immunizations are only necessary to prevent “childhood diseases,” but adults also need vaccines to prevent serious illnesses and death, especially the elderly and individuals with chronic medical conditions. Pneumonia and influenza together are the seventh leading cause of death in the U.S., and the fifth leading cause of death among older adults.

Utah’s **Lt. Governor Olene Walker** will stress the importance of adult immunizations during the **Senior Expo** to be held **October 19 at the South Towne Exposition Center** from 8:00 AM until 5:00 PM. Flu and pneumonia vaccinations will be available for those attending the Expo who are 50 years and older, their spouses, as well as to those who care for seniors.

To increase awareness about adult immunizations and to improve adult immunization levels, the Utah Immunization Program recently developed an adult immunization schedule card. The card will help adults know what immunizations are recommended and will be available during the Senior Expo. The program will also unveil a UTA influenza bus at the Senior Expo. The bus will soon make its way through the streets of Salt Lake City with the message “Don’t hesitate, Vaccine. Take time to fight the flu”, and “For low-cost vaccinations, call the Utah Department of Health 1-800-275-0659”.

Adults need immunizations against tetanus, diphtheria, hepatitis A and B, measles, mumps, rubella, chickenpox, pneumonia and influenza. However, due to nationwide delays in influenza vaccine shipments this year, **limited amounts of the influenza vaccine will be available during October for individuals at highest risk of developing complications.** Large-scale vaccination clinics will begin in November and may continue into January. The Utah Department of Health (UDOH) is urging all health care providers who provide the flu vaccine to ensure that high-risk patients receive priority for vaccination.

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Vaccines can reduce the thousands of needless deaths that occur from diseases or their complications. Vaccination also saves healthcare dollars in the long run by keeping people healthy and avoiding expensive therapies and hospitalizations to treat illnesses like influenza and pneumonia.

Certain individuals are particularly at risk of infection for influenza and pneumonia, including those with chronic medical conditions such as diabetes, asthma, heart and lung disease, HIV infection, cancer, individuals undergoing immunosuppressive therapy and the elderly (>65 years).

Influenza and its complications can be prevented by an annual vaccination, usually given in the fall. Because pneumonia is a major complication resulting from influenza, the pneumonia vaccine is recommended for those at high-risk. The pneumonia vaccine can be given year round and is generally given only once during a person's lifetime.

For more information about adult immunizations, contact your health care provider or the Utah Immunization Hotline at (800) 275-0659.

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