Key Messages for Parents and Patients

Use key messages to encourage parents and patients to keep vaccinations up to date. These messages can be used as written or adapted to fit your particular audience.

You have the power to protect against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Maternal Vaccination
- You have the power to protect yourself and your baby from serious diseases like whooping cough and flu.
- It’s important for your health and the health of your baby to be up to date on your vaccines before you are pregnant and to get recommended vaccines while you are pregnant.
- If you are pregnant, getting vaccinated can help protect your baby after birth by passing on antibodies.
- Some diseases, like flu, are more serious for pregnant women. Changes in the immune system, heart, and lungs during pregnancy make pregnant women more prone to severe illness from flu. Risk of premature labor and delivery is increased in pregnant women with flu.
- Ask your doctor or nurse about the vaccines you need during pregnancy to protect yourself and your baby.

Childhood/Adolescent Vaccination
- You have the power to protect your children against serious diseases like measles, cancers caused by HPV, and whooping cough.
- Vaccines provide immunity before children are exposed to potentially serious, even life-threatening diseases.
- Preteens and teens need four vaccines to protect against serious diseases: meningococcal conjugate vaccine to protect against meningitis and bloodstream infections; HPV vaccine to protect against cancers caused by HPV; Tdap vaccine to protect against tetanus, diphtheria and whooping cough; and a yearly flu vaccine to protect against seasonal flu.
- Ask your child’s doctor or nurse about the vaccines your child needs to be protected against serious diseases.

Adult Vaccination
- You have the power to protect yourself against serious diseases like shingles, pneumonia, and flu.
- Vaccines aren’t just for kids. Adults may need vaccines to protect against whooping cough, the flu, types of pneumonia, and shingles.
- If you have diabetes, some illnesses like flu can make it harder to control your blood sugar (glucose). Make sure you’re up to date on your vaccines.
- Ask your doctor about the vaccines you need to be protected against serious diseases.

Vaccines are safe and effective at preventing serious diseases.

Maternal Vaccination
- The Tdap and flu vaccines are very safe to receive during pregnancy and help prevent harm to you and your developing baby.

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/NIAM
A 2018 study showed that getting a flu shot reduced a pregnant woman’s risk of being hospitalized with flu by an average of 40%.
A 2017 CDC evaluation found Tdap vaccination during the third trimester of pregnancy prevents more than 3 in 4 cases of whooping cough in babies younger than 2 months old.

- Vaccines reduce your risk of infection by working with your body’s natural defenses to help you safely develop immunity to disease.
- Vaccines are tested to ensure that they are safe and effective to receive during pregnancy.
- Like all medical products, vaccines can cause side effects. The most common side effects are mild and go away quickly.

Childhood/Adolescent Vaccination
- Vaccines reduce your child’s risk of infection by working with their body’s natural defenses to help them safely develop immunity to disease.
- Vaccines are among the most effective ways to protect against serious diseases. Many vaccine-preventable diseases are no longer common thanks to vaccines.
- Vaccines are tested to ensure that they are safe and effective for children to receive at the recommended ages.
- Like all medical products, vaccines can cause side effects. The most common side effects are mild and go away quickly.

Adult Vaccination
- Vaccines reduce your risk of infection by working with your body’s natural defenses to help safely develop immunity to disease.
- Vaccines are among the most effective ways to protect against serious diseases. Many vaccine-preventable diseases are no longer common thanks to vaccines.
- Vaccines are thoroughly tested before licensing and carefully monitored even after they are licensed to ensure they are safe.
- Like all medical products, vaccines can cause side effects. The most common side effects are mild and go away quickly.

Vaccinate on time. Getting vaccines at the recommended time is the best way to protect against serious diseases.

Maternal Vaccination
- Preventing whooping cough is especially important for pregnant women and their newborns.
- A Tdap vaccine during pregnancy provides the best protection against whooping cough for both you and your baby.
- After birth, getting your baby the recommended vaccines on time provides them with protection against whooping cough and other serious diseases.
- Talk to your doctor or nurse to make sure you are up to date on vaccines before becoming pregnant and that you receive the Tdap and flu vaccines during pregnancy.

Childhood/Adolescent Vaccination
- By getting your child the recommended vaccines during childhood and adolescence, you protect them from 16 serious diseases.
- The immunization schedule is designed to provide immunity early in life, before children are likely to be exposed to serious, potentially life-threatening diseases.
• Some vaccines require more than one dose to provide the best protection. Each recommended dose is important.

Adult Vaccination
• Vaccines provide you immunity before you are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases.
• Women should be up to date on their vaccinations before becoming pregnant, receive vaccines during pregnancy, and may need certain vaccines after giving birth.
• Use CDC’s adult vaccine assessment tool to see which vaccines might be right for you, and talk to your doctor, nurse, or other healthcare professional to make sure you are up to date on recommended vaccines.

Vaccine-preventable diseases are still a threat. Vaccination is the best protection.

Maternal Vaccination
• While many serious diseases are no longer common in the United States thanks to vaccines, these diseases still exist and can spread when people aren’t vaccinated.
• Some diseases that are prevented by vaccines, like whooping cough and seasonal flu, remain common in the United States.
• By getting recommended vaccines during pregnancy, you can help give your baby and yourself the best protection against whooping cough and flu.

Childhood/Adolescent Vaccination
• While many serious diseases are no longer common in the United States thanks to vaccines, these diseases still exist and can spread when people aren’t vaccinated.
• Even though many serious vaccine-preventable diseases are uncommon in the United States, some are common in other parts of the world. Even if your family does not travel internationally, you could come into contact with international travelers anywhere in your community.
• This year’s measles outbreaks are a key reminder of how quickly diseases can spread when children aren’t vaccinated.
• Some diseases that are prevented by vaccines, like whooping cough and chickenpox, remain common in the United States.
• Some infections that are prevented by vaccines, like HPV, can also lead to serious health problems later in life. Over 30,000 men and women in the United States are diagnosed with cancers caused by HPV each year.
• Following the recommended immunization schedule helps you protect your child against vaccine-preventable diseases.

Adult Vaccination
• While many serious diseases are no longer common in the United States thanks to vaccines, these diseases still exist and can spread when people aren’t vaccinated.
• Even though many serious vaccine-preventable diseases are uncommon in the United States, some are common in other parts of the world. Even if you do not travel internationally, you could come into contact with international travelers anywhere in your community.
• This year’s measles outbreaks are a key reminder of how quickly diseases can spread when people aren’t vaccinated.
• Every year thousands of adults in the U.S. become seriously ill and are hospitalized because of diseases that vaccines can help prevent. Many adults even die from these diseases.
• By getting vaccinated, you can help protect yourself from serious, sometimes deadly, diseases.

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