*Audience: Adults/Public*

*Length: Approx 450 words*

IMMUNIZATION PROTECTS ALL OF US: Don’t Wait. Vaccinate!

In the United States, vaccines have greatly reduced infectious diseases that once routinely killed or harmed many infants, children, and adults. However, the viruses and bacteria that cause vaccine-preventable disease still exist and can be passed on to people who are not protected by vaccines. Every year, thousands of Americans still suffer serious health problems, are hospitalized, and even die from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines. Protect your health and the health of your family. Make sure you and your loved ones are up-to-date on recommended vaccines.

## Measles in U.S.

Between January and June 2014, there were over 500 cases of measles reported in the U.S., *more than in the last 20 years.*

* Before the measles vaccination program started in 1963, about 3 to 4 million people in the U.S. got measles each year.
* Thanks to widespread vaccination, measles was declared to be eliminated from the U.S. in 2000.
* However, measles is still common in many other countries and is brought into the U.S. by unvaccinated travelers who get it while abroad.

**Measles is very contagious and can cause serious illness. The best way to protect yourself and loved ones from measles is by getting vaccinated.**

**Here’s why you shouldn’t wait:**

* Many vaccine-preventable diseases are still common in the U.S.
* Those that are not common here are still found in other parts of the world, and can still be a threat.
* Some of these diseases are very contagious.
* Any of these diseases could be serious – even for healthy people.
* Certain people may be at higher risk for getting some diseases or having more serious illness if they were to get sick, like young children, older adults, and those with health conditions.

Vaccines are our best protection against a number of serious, and sometimes deadly, diseases. Every year, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and other medical experts update vaccine recommendations for children, teens, and adults based on the latest research and evidence-based science on vaccine safety, effectiveness, and patterns of vaccine-preventable diseases.

**You have the power to protect yourself and the ones you love. Talk to your healthcare professional about which vaccines are right for you and your family.**

*Getting Vaccinated*

Most private health insurance plans cover the cost of recommended vaccines. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program helps provide vaccines to children whose parents or guardians may not be able to afford them. Medicare and Medicaid also cover a number of vaccines for adults. Vaccines are available at private doctor offices, as well as other convenient locations such as pharmacies, workplaces, community health clinics, and health departments.

**To learn more about vaccines and take a quick quiz to find out which vaccines you may need, visit:** [**www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults**](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adults)