

Immunization nurse champions

By Chad Rittle, DNP, MPH, RN, FAAOHN, and Ruth Francis, MPH, MCHES

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Staying informed about vaccines is the key.

ARE YOU an immunization nurse champion where you work? For 15 years, RNs have been ranked by the public in a Gallup Poll as the most trusted profession. We should leverage that respect to promote adult vaccination at every opportunity in our daily practice. The American Nurses Association (ANA) fully supports immunization and participating in health promotion activities. When we become immunization champions, we help improve the public's health by protecting the community from vaccine-preventable diseases.

But with all the priorities placed regularly on nurses, how can we stay up to date with current vaccine recommendations and changes?

How to stay informed

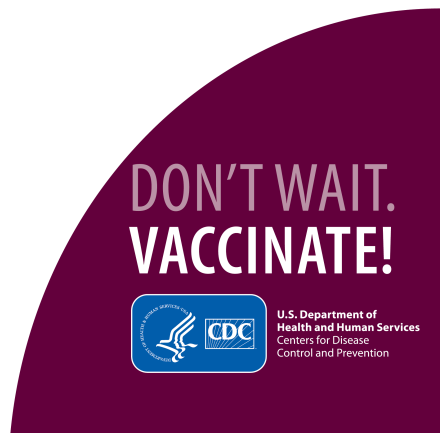
Every February, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) updates the Recommended Adult (19 years or older) Immunization Schedule based on the current Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations (cdc.gov/vaccines/acip/index

Vaccination resources

It's not too early for nurses to plan for the 2017-2018 flu season! Bookmark the Immunization Action Coalition website (immunize.org) for promotions, toolkits, and resources. For iPhone or iPad users, try the new Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Vaccine Schedules app here: itunes.apple.com/us/app/cdc-vaccine-schedules/id875273858?mt=8

And here are some other resources from the CDC to keep close at hand:

- Recommended Immunization Schedules for Adults, 2017 cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/adult.html
- 3 Important Reasons For Adults to Get Vaccinated cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults/downloads/fs-three-reasons.pdf
- Email Updates service.govdelivery.com/accounts/USCDC/subscriber/new?preferences=true
- Vaccine Information for Adults cdc.gov/vaccines/adults/index.html



[.html](#)). Keep this site bookmarked for easy access. And remember, all vaccine administrators must read and understand the notes section attached to the schedule before administering any vaccine.

Other resources include the Immunization Action Coalition, which works in concert with the CDC to educate health professionals about vaccine recommendations, and the CDC Vaccine Information for Adults page, where you can find a wealth of information, current recommendations, and recent changes. In addition, the CDC webpage allows you to receive email alerts about new announcements and recommendation changes. And on-the-go resources are now available for portable devices. (See *Vaccination resources*.) ANA offers resources at nursingworld.org/immunize.

Educating patients

One convenient tool for educating patients is a fact sheet from the CDC called *3 Important Reasons For Adults to Get Vaccinated*. On the front of the fact sheet is a discussion about the three important reasons, and the back includes information about vaccine-preventable diseases and why adults need vaccines to stay healthy and to help protect their loved ones.

Be a champion

These resources are only a fraction of those available for nurses to get and stay informed. To help reduce vaccine-preventable disease, take active responsibility to find sources of reliable, evidence-based information, stay up-to-date, and educate your patients. Will you become the immunization nurse champion where you work? It's up to you! ★

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