






Back-to-school vaccines not just for students

August 11 2015

Classic Illnesses: **Telltale Signs**

A number of old diseases are making a comeback. The American Osteopathic Association recommends calling your physician immediately if you or a loved one has any of these unique symptoms.

Measles	Mumps	Rubella	Chickenpox	Pertussis
				
Rash that starts on the face, red eyes and a bad cough	Swelling above the jaw; plus aches, fever and other flu-like symptoms	Rash on face lasting for 2-3 days	Itchy red bumps that appear in clusters, plus flu-like symptoms	Intense coughing, with a distinctive 'whoop' sound
Prevention: MMR Vaccine	MMR Vaccine	MMR Vaccine	Varicella Vaccine	DTaP/ Tdap Vaccine

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A number of old diseases are making a comeback. The American Osteopathic Association recommends calling your physician immediately if you or a loved one has any of these unique symptoms. Credit: The American Osteopathic Association

Back to school is an annual reminder to make sure children are fully vaccinated. But vaccination is a life-long health concern and the

American Osteopathic Association (AOA) urges adults to use the seasonal cue to ensure their own immunizations are up to date.

Vaccine-preventable diseases - such as measles, mumps, flu and whooping cough - are an ongoing [public health threat](#), with an active mumps outbreak currently reported in Illinois. Outbreaks in 2015 infected [patients](#) of all ages and resulted in hospitalizations and death.

The AOA, which represents the more than 110,000 osteopathic physicians (DOs) and medical students in the U.S, resolved at its annual business meeting that DOs should treat patients' vaccination history as an integral part of their health record. That new policy also urges DOs to take all reasonable steps to ensure patients are fully immunized against [vaccine](#)-preventable illness regardless of their age.

The policy is important guidance for physicians because adults typically assume they were fully vaccinated as children, said Jennifer Caudle, DO, assistant professor of family medicine at Rowan University. That assumption wasn't an issue when vaccination compliance was high and many illnesses were at or near eradication levels, Caudle added. Today, even those who were fully vaccinated may have waning immunity, leaving them vulnerable to outbreak illnesses.

"Vaccination schedules change over time and the ongoing outbreaks show us the importance of ensuring all patients are protected to the current standard," Dr. Caudle explained. "As an osteopathic family physician, I believe vaccination is one of most effective tools available to keep my patients healthy, particularly when there are known threats."

Talk to your doctor about these essential vaccines:

- Tdap (Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)
- Zostavax (Shingles)
- Pneumococcal Vaccine (Pneumonia, meningitis and other severe conditions)
- Yearly flu vaccine
- HPV vaccine (For women **and** men)
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- MMR (measles, mumps and rubella)

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It's not uncommon to lose vaccination records. If you're unable to verify which vaccines you've received, Dr. Caudle recommends talking with your doctor about testing for immunity or repeating vaccinations.

"It's never been more important for doctors and physicians to work together to ensure vaccinations and health records are up to date. For most patients, it is safe to receive additional vaccination doses or test for immunity to certain diseases." said Caudle. "With the growing number

of infectious disease outbreaks, you are doing more harm for yourself and those around you if you don't get vaccinated."

DOs are trained to partner with patients to help them get healthy and stay well. Recently, the association urged the public to become familiar with the hallmark signs of vaccine-preventable diseases to help contain outbreaks. A simple reference is available to help patients quickly recognize the telltale signs. Visit osteopathic.org/classicillnesses for additional information.

Provided by American Osteopathic Association

Citation: Back-to-school vaccines not just for students (2015, August 11) retrieved 10 April 2024 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2015-08-back-to-school-vaccines-students.html>

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