

HEALTH NEWS



**Get Your
Flu Shot!**

**Promoting & Protecting Your
Health**

Winter 2014-2015

COMAL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Do You Need the Shingles Vaccine?

Every year in the United States, shingles affects approximately 1 million people.

Shingles is a disease caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox: Herpes Zoster. Only people who have had chickenpox can get shingles. The disease remains dormant in the nervous system until certain factors "reawake" the virus. Factors associated with a weakened immune system are the most common triggers for a shingles outbreak including: advancing age, infection with the AIDS virus, immune-suppressive drugs, and periods of illness and high stress.

Although these factors can play a role in an outbreak, most cases of shingles occur among adults who are otherwise healthy.

The pain of shingles, considered one of the most severe types of pain an adult can suffer, is unrelenting and, unfortunately, largely untreatable.

Although people with shingles cannot give someone else shingles, they can pass the chicken pox virus to others, via direct contact with the rash.

The only way to prevent shingles is with the vaccine. A single dose of the shingles vaccine is recommended for people 60 years of age and older. Under certain health-related circumstances, some medical providers approve the shingles shot for people 50-59.

If you are unsure if the shingles vaccine is right for you, contact your primary care provider. Comal County Public Health keeps the shingles vaccine in stock. Call for appointments: (830) 221-1150



Information from: www.vaccine.chop.edu

Want more information about
shingles and/or the shingles vaccine?
[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/
shingles/default.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vpd-vac/shingles/default.htm)

What is Community Immunity?

When a critical portion of a community is immunized against a contagious disease, most members of the community are protected against that disease because there is little opportunity for an outbreak. Even those who are not eligible for certain vaccines—such as infants, pregnant women, or immunocompromised individuals—get some protection because the spread of contagious disease is contained. This is known as "community immunity." You may also hear it referred to by the term "herd immunity."

From: National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases www.niaid.nih.gov



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***"By increasing 3-dose HPV
vaccination coverage to 80%, an
estimated additional 53,000 cases of
cervical cancer could be prevented
over the lifetimes of those aged 12 or
younger."***

-CDC MMWR June 2013

What Do You Think?

Q. Which vaccine developer isolated the mumps virus from his daughter?

A. Maurice Hilleman isolated the mumps virus from his daughter Jeryl Lynn while she was ill.

www.historyofvaccines.org



Be A Hero!

<http://www.ready.gov/kids>

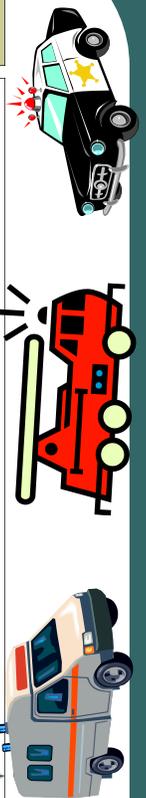
Parents should not be the only ones preparing for emergencies. Young children and teens alike need to be part of the process — for their own safety and sense of empowerment. The Federal Emergency Management Agency’s (FEMA) Youth Preparedness Program recommends families:

- *Work together to build an emergency kit.*
- *Sit down as a family to talk about your communications plan.*
- *Role-play what you would do during a disaster.*
 - *Hold fire drills in your house.*

FEMA has a fun website dedicated to children, parents, and educators to help families prepare for all types of disaster situations. There are various types of resources and even a game page!



Print out an emergency kit checklist and prepare one today!



Good health is a duty to yourself, to your contemporaries, to your inheritors, to the progress of the world.

~Gwendolyn Brooks



Investigating and Reporting Notifiable Conditions

Texas Health & Safety Code, Chapters 81, 84, and 87 require certain conditions be reported to the Department of State Health Services (DSHS). All medical providers, hospitals, schools, and laboratories are required to report patients who are suspected of having a notifiable condition.

The nursing staff at Comal County Public Health (CCPH) perform an important role in investigating and reporting notifiable conditions. Once a week, nurses call all the medical providers in Comal County.

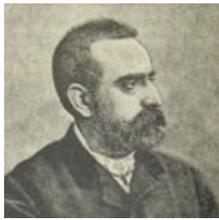
Certain conditions are sent directly to CCPH for initial investigation. All resulting data is reported to DSHS.

DSHS maintains a Notifiable Conditions List that contains all the conditions and how and when they must be reported. For instance, depending on the severity of the illness or disease, some conditions must be reported immediately, some within one working day, and others within one week.

Notifiable Conditions List

Keep up with reportables in Comal County!

www.co.comal.tx.us/Public%20Health/Reportable_Illnesses.htm



Spanish physician Jaime Ferran developed the first cholera vaccine in 1885. His was the first vaccine to be used against a bacterial disease in humans.

www.historyofvaccines.org

Would you like to learn more about reportable conditions and how they are investigated?

www.dshs.state.tx.us/idcu/investigation/conditions

Schools Benefit from ImmTrac

Schools greatly benefit from the use of ImmTrac. ImmTrac enables schools to access immunization records required for enrollment, saving parents a trip to their health-care provider. If a child moves and changes schools, the new school can quickly and easily access that student's immunization history or to transfer, thus simplifying enrollment.



Schools appreciate ImmTrac because it's a free service, it's easy to implement, offers convenient access to official records, maintains secure paperless consolidation and storage of students' records from multiple providers, and ImmTrac-generated immunization records meet state requirements.



www.immtracforeveryone.com

ImmTrac
Texas Immunization Registry

You can safely store your immunization records in ImmTrac at no cost to you. Your records will be kept secure and confidential. Even if you got one vaccine at your doctor's office and another at your local pharmacy, you can electronically store all your immunization records in ImmTrac. Then, you will have one immunization history.

You can request a copy of your immunization history when you need it for college entrance requirements, international travel, employment in health and safety fields, and other instances.

Your ImmTrac authorized health-care provider can access your immunization history and make sure you are not over/under vaccinated. This way, you will be fully protected against vaccine-preventable diseases and save money by not paying for vaccines you do not need.

We have ImmTrac Specialists on Staff!

Two ImmTrac Outreach Specialists are on staff to assist you!

Annie Brown brownan@co.comal.tx.us

Susana Dias diassu@co.comal.tx.us

Or you can call them at 830-221-1150.

ImmTrac is considered an Immunization Information System (IIS), which is regulated by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

"IISs are confidential, population-based, computerized databases that record all immunization doses administered by participating providers to persons residing within a given geopolitical area."

-CDC Website

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/iis/about.html

Promoting and Protecting Your Health



Elmo and Nurse Honeywell teach young children about vaccinations



What is the *Whooping Cough Shot?*

The childhood vaccine is called DTaP, and the pertussis booster vaccine for adolescents and adults is called Tdap.

Pertussis is also known as "whooping cough" because of the "whooping" sound that is made when gasping for air after a fit of coughing.

For more info: <http://www.cdc.gov/pertussis/index.html>

How to Reach Us

178 East Mill Street,
Suite 210
New Braunfels, TX 78130

Phone: 830-221-1150
Fax: 830-620-3495

Web: www.co.comal.tx.us/health

Your Health Department Offers...

Call for an Appointment

Monday-Friday

(830) 221-1150

8am-12 & 1-5pm



- Blood Pressure Monitoring
- Response to vaccinations (titers)
- HIV/AIDS information
- Screening for TB exposure
- Referrals for medical/social needs
- Confidential STD counseling.
- Adult Flu clinics
- Health Fair participation
- Community Education
- Blue Cross/Blue Shield Provider for immunizations.
- Immunizations for local businesses
- Pregnancy testing
- Vision & Hearing Testing for 4 year olds

Bulverde Satellite Clinic

2nd Friday every other month

By appointment only

(830)221-1150

Minimum attendees required

