

HEALTH NEWS



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COMAL COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Flu Shots

\$24

How Vaccines Prevent Disease

Vaccines help develop immunity by imitating an infection. This type of infection, however, does not cause illness, but it does cause the immune system to produce T-lymphocytes and antibodies. Sometimes, after getting a vaccine, the imitation infection can cause minor symptoms, such as fever. Such minor symptoms are normal and should be expected as the body builds immunity.

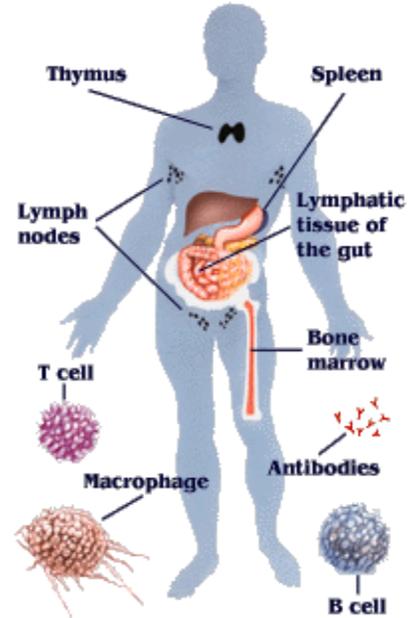
Once the imitation infection goes away, the body is left with a supply of "memory" T-lymphocytes, as well as B-lymphocytes that will remember how to fight that disease in the future. It typically takes a few weeks for the body to produce T-lymphocytes and B-lymphocytes after vaccination. Therefore, it is possible that a person who was infected with a disease just before or just after vaccination could develop symptoms and get a disease, because the vaccine has not

had enough time to provide protection.

From: *Understanding How Vaccines Work*: March 2012 from The CDC.

For more information, and to learn more about your immune system and the types of vaccines, go to:

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>



Compiling your Shot Record

At Public Health we, advise adults on how to compile their shot record. As children, parents are responsible for maintaining current shot records, but young adults often lose track of an official record. For reasons such as employment, travel, pregnancy, & education, a complete immunization record will prevent the

extra cost & trouble of antibody tests or re-vaccination. Here are the suggestions we pass along:

- Contact all previous healthcare providers.
- Thoroughly search all documents at home.

- Contact the high school you attended last.
- Check with previous employers.

Once you have collected your immunization history, register with ImmTrac to preserve your record.

www.immunize.org

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The life spans of Americans have increased by more than thirty years in large part because of vaccines.

www.vaccines.gov



Vaccination and Pregnancy

Before becoming pregnant, a woman should be up-to-date on routine adult vaccines. This will help protect mother and baby. Generally speaking, live vaccines should not be given within a month before conception, while inactivated (killed) vaccines may be given at any time before or during pregnancy, if needed.

It is best to talk to your healthcare provider about vaccinations before you become pregnant. It is safe, and very important, for a woman who is pregnant during flu season to receive the inactivated flu vaccine. A pregnant woman who gets the flu is at risk for serious complications and hospitalization.

The CDC has guidelines for the vaccines you need before, during, and after pregnancy. It is also safe for a woman to receive vaccines right after giving birth, even while she is breastfeeding.

From: www.vaccines.gov

More information is available at:

www.cdc.gov

“Health is like money, we never have a true idea of its value until we lose it.”

~Josh Billings

Who Should Get the Meningococcal Shot?

Meningococcal disease is a very serious infection. It's caused by the bacterium *Neisseria meningitidis*, which is spread via person-to-person. The MCV4 vaccine is recommended for all children and teens, ages 11-18. It is also recommended for people at increased risk of the disease; this includes:

- College students

- People with certain immune system disorders
- Those with damaged or missing spleen
- People working with the bacteria in laboratories
- Some international travelers
- Recruits into the U.S. military

Note: As of January 1, 2012, all entering college and university students are required to show proof of an initial meningococcal vaccination or a booster dose during the five-year period before enrolling. They must get the vaccine at least 10 days before the semester begins. ([Chapter 21, Subchapter T, Sections 21.610 through 21.614](#))

For more information:

www.immunize.org

Your Health Department Offers Special Services for Adults

- Blood Pressure Monitoring
- Response to vaccinations and titers
- HIV/AIDS information
- Screening for TB exposure.
- HIV Testing
- Testing for Hepatitis B & C
- Referrals for medical/social needs
- Confidential STD counseling.
- Adult Flu clinics
- Health Fair participation
- Community Education

Hours:

Monday-Friday

8-12 & 1-5

830-221-1150



ImmTrac Specialists at Comal County Public Health



ImmTrac is the Texas immunization registry, a free service from the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS). It is a secure, confidential registry that electronically stores vaccine information for children, Texas first responders, and registered adults. ImmTrac contains over 73 million immunization records for more than 5.8 million Texas children younger than 18 years of age. This valuable information comes from a variety of sources including private health-care providers, public health clinics, Medicaid claims administrators, the Bureau of Vital Statistics, and Women, Infants and Children (WIC) clinics. Regardless of the number of sources, each client's immunization information is consolidated into one electronic record.

ImmTrac stores immunization records for any Texan of any age!

ImmTrac Registration: Who Benefits the Most?

Texans of all ages are encouraged to enroll in ImmTrac. Certain adult populations particularly profit from the benefits of ImmTrac. These adults have life circumstances that require immunizations, or have situations in which immunizations are advised. These individuals include:

- First Responders (EMT, Fire Fighters, Law Enforcement)
- Health Care Professionals
- International Travelers
- Teachers and Child Care Workers
- Students (College and Vocational School)
- People Who Work with High-Risk Populations



If you would like more information about the benefits of ImmTrac, call one of our ImmTrac Outreach Specialists at (830) 221-1150.

ImmTrac Outreach Specialist Hard at Work in our Community

The Comal County Public Health Department has two ImmTrac Outreach Specialists who work in the community providing education, technical assistance, and awareness about the ImmTrac program. Jenna Robinson and Maggie Moreno have worked with the school nurses in our community and provided them with the tools to ensure children in our schools are current on all state required vaccines. They attend local health fairs educating on the importance of the ImmTrac program, and work diligently to enroll Comal County's children and adults in the registry. Jenna and Maggie also work with local healthcare providers to ensure they are actively using the ImmTrac registry.

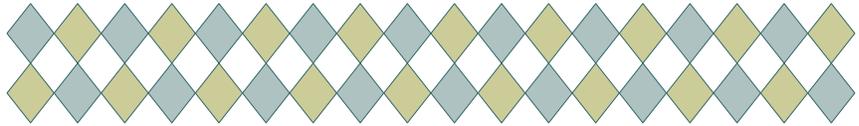


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Web: www.co.comal.tx.us/health

Visit us on the Web!

<http://www.co.comal.tx.us/health.htm>



Comal County Public Health

**is now an In-Network Provider for
Immunizations with**

**Blue Cross Blue Shield of
Texas.**



Meet our Immunization Clerks!

When you first arrive at the health department, you'll most likely be greeted by one of our friendly immunization clerks. In addition to working the counter and answering the telephones, the immunization clerks are responsible for medical billing and maintaining medical paperwork. Because of their position, they are at the forefront of customer service answering questions, making appointments, mailing reminder letters, and providing referrals to local agencies. Comal County Public Health focuses on teamwork and for that reason, the immunization clerks are involved in all aspects of our services.

Currently, we have three wonderful immunization clerks: Diana Vela, Diana Rios, and Denise Torres. All have worked here as immunization clerks for at least 10 years. In fact, between the three of them, they have

forty-one years of public health experience! Years of service has enabled them to provide excellent customer service and to possess valuable knowledge about vaccines, and immunization schedules. When asked what they like best about working at Comal County Public Health, the clerks unanimously answered, "working with the public." As life-long residents of Comal County, Diana V., Denise, and Diana R. are proud to be a part of the community they serve.

Their background in immunizations provide them with a special viewpoint. When asked what helpful advice would they give to the public, both Denise and Diana V. advises people to plan ahead and not wait until the last minute to get immunizations. Diana R. encourages everyone to be vaccinated, "Immunizations are very important."

When you visit the health department, bring all necessary paperwork, including your shot record. Please be patient, the intake process can sometimes take longer in complicated situations.

**Thank you Diana
Vela, Denise Torres,
and Diana Rios!**

