

Vaccinations

Vaccinations are now offered against many viral illnesses such as mumps, measles, and chickenpox. There are also vaccinations to protect you from tetanus and from pneumococcal pneumonia (a specific bacterial pneumonia).

Tetanus vaccine is now recommended every 10 years. The CDC now suggests that we give TDaP that also protects against pertussis because there has been a resurgence of pertussis in the United States. We have that in the office and will be using the new vaccine as we revaccinate all our patients.

The CDC Recommendation is as follows:

Adults 19 through 64 years of age should substitute TDaP for one booster dose of TD.

New! Human Papilloma Virus Vaccination

This new vaccination is recommended for all women over the age of 9 and there are studies looking into vaccinations for males.

3 shots are required for the vaccine to be effective.

After the first shot, there is one in 2 and then in 6 months after the first. The cost is \$120-200 per shot.... Ouch!

Why get this vaccine? HPV is known to sometimes (although rarely) cause cervical cancer and this shot when taken properly (all 3) is 100% successful in preventing cervical cancer and 89% effective in preventing infection with 4 of the HPV strains linked to genital warts and cervical cancer.



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The **Choice Care Life Potential** Program Preventative Care

It is within your power to make a difference in your health. Unfortunately it is too easy to ignore risks to your health and it can be very hard to make effective changes that improve your health. Dr Zwelling's Life Potential program makes preventative care information accessible, and our Life Potential Profile can help you take control of your life 3 Easy Steps at a time.

My personal opinion:

- 1) It is a good idea to get the vaccine if you are female even if you have had HPV. This is because there are so many strains of the virus that you may not have been exposed to one of the strains and that strain may just be the one that causes you trouble down the line.
- 2) This does not protect you against other venereal diseases so you must still protect yourself with condoms
- 3) If you are monogamous and HPV negative and plan on remaining with your current partner and that partner is "true blue"... you probably don't need the vaccine.

I just don't understand why sex has to be so complicated and expensive!!

New! Shingles Vaccine

The shingles vaccine is also a new vaccine offered. This vaccine is effective in decreasing the chances of contracting shingles and/or in decreasing the severity of the shingles episode.

Shingles is not fun. It is a painful rash that occurs when the chickenpox virus that lives in the nerve root decides to migrate down the nerve root and set up shop in your skin. In order to get shingles, a person must have had exposure to chickenpox in the past.

The vaccine is not meant to treat the illness. It is preventive only. And it is only 61% effective when given. In other words there are those people who get the vaccine (it is really only a double dose of the usual chicken pox vaccine given to children) who will still get the illness. Moreover, those who have had shingles may contract it again.

There is some question about the drug's use in those who are immunosuppressed and there is also a question about the necessity of a "booster".

My personal opinion... Not ready for prime time.

But, if you want to have the vaccine, I would never say no. You must, however, be an educated consumer.

Information helps you make healthy choices.

