Getting Immunized Can Protect You, Others from Illness

Did you know that according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), vaccines have prevented countless cases of infectious diseases and saved literally millions of lives?

August is National Immunization Awareness Month and OAOHN would like to take this opportunity to encourage you to care for yourself, and your loved ones, by reminding you of the importance of immunizations as preventive care.

According to the CDC, disease prevention is key to public health. Vaccines can protect both the people who receive them and those with whom they come in contact. Vaccines are responsible for the control of many infectious diseases that were once common around the world, including polio, measles, diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), rubella (German measles), mumps and tetanus. A vaccine actually eradicated smallpox, one of the most devastating diseases in history.

But, how do they work?

When germs, such as bacteria or viruses, invade the body, they attack and multiply. This invasion is called an infection and the infection is what causes illness. The immune system then has to fight the infection. Once it fights off the infection, the body is left with a supply of cells that help recognize and fight that disease in the future, according to the CDC.

The CDC also says that a vaccination is designed to help the body create these cells to fight the disease by introducing a weakened form of the disease into the body. The body will then make antibodies to fight the invaders so then if ever the actual disease germs attack the body, the antibodies will return to destroy them.

To ensure vaccines are held to the highest standard of safety and efficacy, the CDC has measures in place to test and continuously monitor them. To learn more, visit the CDC Vaccine Safety website and read their Healthcare Personnel Vaccination Recommendations.

For a complete list of immunizations and a schedule for receiving them, visit the CDC Immunization Schedules website.

Another great way to give a boost to your physical health is by maintaining your spiritual health through visualization. Visualization engages the imagination by thinking of a scene, a thought, or a belief in our minds. This practice can be particularly therapeutic and has been shown to decrease stress, blood pressure, manage chronic pain, and promote general healing.

Additionally, getting annual physicals and tests, which include regularly scheduled vaccinations, from your doctor is key in sustaining your health and preventing disease. Having a Primary Care Physician (PCP) who can coordinate your care is vital to your good health. A PCP typically specializes in Family Medicine, Internal Medicine or General Practice.

If you don't have a PCP, finding one is easy! Just visit your insurance carrier's website, look for the "find a doctor" area and follow the instructions.