

Childhood and Adult Vaccinations Are Very Important *especially during COVID-19 pandemic*

Health officials are emphasizing the importance of vaccinations for children and adults to protect against the flu and other diseases, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic.

“Pediatricians are always concerned when we see a drop in immunization rates since this could lead to an increase in vaccine preventable diseases such as measles and whooping cough,” said Dr. Umber Chohan, infectious diseases specialist with Kaiser Permanente Southern California. “If vaccination rates decline, we may possibly see an increase in some preventable diseases that can have dire consequences on children’s health.”

It is also critically important for adults to be up-to-date with their vaccinations, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. The CDC said that adults are at-risk of contracting serious diseases that are still common in the U.S.

Infants, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems (like those undergoing cancer treatment) are especially vulnerable to vaccine preventable diseases. Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health and any side effects are usually mild and go away on their own. Severe side effects are very rare.

“In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, many health care organizations have taken important steps to ensure their patients’ safety, and to reassure them that visiting a medical facility for any health reason remains safe, and is critically important to protect one’s health,” said Dr. Chohan, who practices at Kaiser Permanente’s medical offices in Woodland Hills.

For instance, all Kaiser Permanente medical facilities screen members’ temperatures before they are allowed into the building, she explained. Patients who are sick are often seen in a different area or are brought in through a different entrance to a separate area. Some locations also have drive-through vaccination sites for people who prefer not to enter a medical office building.

“It’s understandable that some people question the safety of vaccines,” Dr. Chohan noted. “However, the evidence is clear – vaccinations are safe, and we’re taking the necessary steps to ensure our patients’ safety.”