Notes: HD video soundbites of ACP's president discussing the importance of adult immunization are available to download at http://www.dssimon.com/MM/ACP-immunizations/. If you are looking for local or national expert commentary to inform stories on flu or other vaccine-preventable diseases, please contact Steve Majewski at SMajewski@mail.acponline.org or 215-351-2514. ACP has access to some of the nation's foremost experts in adult immunization.

American College of Physicians reminds adults: Vaccines are not just for children

Nation's second-largest physician organization is committed to helping raise adult immunization rates, especially among adults with chronic conditions

Philadelphia, July 30, 2019 – During National Immunization Awareness Month in August, the American College of Physicians (ACP) is reminding adults about the importance of vaccinations for protection against many common and serious diseases.

"Many adults are not aware that they need vaccines throughout their lives and so have not received recommended vaccinations," said ACP President Robert M. McLean, MD, FACP. "Adults should get a seasonal flu shot and internists should use that opportunity to make sure their patients are up to date on the latest recommended immunizations."

In addition to an annual influenza vaccination, other important adult immunizations include Tdap to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough); pneumococcal to protect against pneumococcal pneumonia, bacteremia, and meningitis; HPV to prevent cervical, anal, and other cancers; hepatitis B; and herpes zoster to help prevent shingles. Each vaccine should be administered according to the CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidelines for dosing and schedules.

"Vaccines are safe, effective, and help prevent illness, hospitalization, and even death, especially among the elderly and those with chronic conditions and weakened immune systems," Dr. McLean said. "Physicians should conduct a vaccine needs assessment with their patients regularly. People who cannot get a flu shot or other vaccines for medical reasons should talk to their internist about other ways of protecting themselves."

The latest adult immunization schedule and recommendations approved by the ACIP are available in *Annals of Internal Medicine*. ACP and other professional organizations reviewed and approved the schedule.

In June 2019, ACIP voted to raise the upper age for catch-up vaccination against HPV in men to age 26 years – mirroring the recommendation for women – and recommended that patients aged 27 to 45 years discuss with their doctors about receiving the vaccine.

ACIP also voted to recommend that the 13-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) be administered "based on shared clinical decision making" in adults 65 years or older who do not have an immunocompromising condition and who have not previously received PCV13. It still recommends that all adults 65 years or older receive a dose of the 23-valent pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine (PPSV23).

ACIP's recommendations must be reviewed and approved by the CDC director. The final recommendation will be published in an upcoming *Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report*.

ACP's Adult Immunization Resource Hub is another source of information for internal medicine physicians. Updated regularly, the site includes the latest vaccine recommendations, patient education resources, quality improvement strategies, practice assessments, and more.

About the American College of Physicians
The American College of Physicians is the largest medical specialty organization in the United States with members in more than 145 countries worldwide. ACP membership includes 159,000 internal medicine physicians (internists), related subspecialists, and medical students. Internal medicine physicians are specialists who apply scientific knowledge and clinical expertise to the diagnosis, treatment, and compassionate care of adults across the spectrum from health to complex illness. Follow ACP on Twitter, Facebook, and Instagram.

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