



Department of Health
Agency of Human Services



St. J Health Center Vaccinates Children for Life

National Infant immunization Week — April 23-30

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Communication Office
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ST. JOHNSBURY – Dana Kraus, MD is pleased with the high vaccination rate – 93 percent – for children who get their health care at the St. Johnsbury Health Center. And she believes they can do even better in the coming months and years.

Most of the 392 patients under the age of 18 that are served by the health center are fully immunized, having all the doses for all the vaccines recommended for their age.

“We hope to duplicate this high vaccination rate in all six of the Northern County Health Care clinics,” said Dr. Kraus. “Using electronic medical records, it’s possible to identify children who are overdue for vaccines when they come in for other reasons, and use that opportunity to catch them up. It’s also possible to generate reports from the electronic medical record to find those children are overdue for preventive visits and vaccines – and bring those kids back in for care.”

Health care providers at St. Johnsbury Health Center take every opportunity to make sure their patients are protected. If a child comes in for an ear infection, but it’s close to a year since the last well child visit, a new appointment is scheduled immediately. The health maintenance section in the electronic medical record provides a reminder when a patient is overdue for vaccines.

Vaccines for young children now protect against 14 serious diseases: diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), hepatitis B, polio, Hib (haemophilus influenzae type B), varicella (chickenpox), measles, mumps, rubella, pneumococcal disease, hepatitis A, rotavirus and influenza.

Although most children in Vermont have had most of their vaccinations, just over 60 percent of young children have had all of the doses for all of the vaccines recommended for their age group.

Dr. Kraus said that parents of the children in her practice should be credited for getting their children vaccinated – especially children under age 5 during the H1N1 flu season.

At 72 percent, Vermont earned recognition in April 2010 for having the nation’s second highest H1N1 flu vaccination rate for children age 6 months to 17 years.

Vaccinate for Life is a statewide effort to provide the most accurate information about the importance and safety of vaccines, and to protect both children and adults from vaccine-preventable diseases. If you have questions about vaccinations, ask your health care provider, check the Vermont Department of Health’s website healthvermont.gov our new Facebook page ‘**Healthy Vermont Families**’, follow us on **Twitter**, or call our immunization program toll-free at 1-800-640-4374.

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