



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

Immunizing Infants

National Infant Immunizations Week – April 20-27, 2013

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[Announcer] This program is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the *MMWR*, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

One of the main things parents can do to protect their child's health is to make sure they're up-to-date on all recommended vaccines.

Dr. Yabo Beysolow is a pediatrician with CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. She's joining us today to discuss the importance of ensuring that children are up-to-date on their vaccinations. Welcome to the show, Yabo.

[Dr. Beysolow] Thank you, Bob. It's a pleasure to be here.

[Dr. Gaynes] Yabo, how many diseases are children protected from through vaccination?

[Dr. Beysolow] Well, Bob, vaccines protect against diseases that can be severe, or even fatal, like measles or whooping cough. By the time a child is two years old you can protect them from 14 serious diseases by immunizing them.

[Dr. Gaynes] Are most children getting all the recommended vaccinations?

[Dr. Beysolow] Yes they are. Less than one percent of children receive no vaccines at all. Most parents *are* vaccinating their children.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the risks associated with missed or delayed vaccinations?

[Dr. Beysolow] Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious. Some may require a child to be hospitalized and some, unfortunately, can be fatal. When your child is *not* vaccinated, they are at risk for these diseases. Also, when your child does not receive their vaccines, they are putting others at risk by exposing them to these diseases. For example, the MMR vaccine, which protects against measles, is not recommended until one year of age. If a child under a year is exposed to measles by someone who is not vaccinated, this can be fatal to that child.

[Dr. Gaynes] Yabo, what advice can you offer parents who are concerned about vaccine safety?

[Dr. Beysolow] Well, Bob, it's understandable that parents may have concerns about vaccines, as they may have about other medications. However, parents should know that

the US now has the safest, most effective vaccine supply, and millions of children are safely vaccinated. The most common side effects from vaccines are typically very mild.

[Dr. Gaynes] What should a parent do if their child is behind on vaccinations?

[Dr. Beysolow] You should contact your child's health care provider as soon as possible, because any time a vaccine is delayed or skipped, your child is more vulnerable to disease.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about childhood immunizations?

[Dr. Beysolow] You may visit our website at cdc.gov/vaccines.

[Dr. Gaynes] Thanks, Yabo. I've been talking today with CDC's Dr. Yabo Beysolow about the importance of ensuring children are fully immunized.

Remember, recent outbreaks of measles and pertussis underscore the importance that parents should remain vigilant in ensuring their children receive all recommended vaccinations on time and keep accurate records. Delaying vaccinations can put your child at risk for serious, even fatal, diseases. If your children's immunizations aren't up-to-date, talk with their health care provider.

Until next time, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO.