

Health Wellness & Nutrition: **BACK TO SCHOOL**

For Communities of Color, the Fight Against Diabetes is Far From Over

Recently, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) announced the rate of new cases of diabetes in the United States declined by about 20 percent from 2008 to 2014.



Patricia A. Maryland, Dr.PH
NNPA Columnist

This represents the first sustained decrease in diagnosis since the disease emerged as a major threat to public health over the course of the past two decades. But the fight is far from over,

community is shouldering an unequal burden when it comes to diabetes treatment, prevention, research and education. And so the CDC's announcement — while welcome news — does not signal that the fight against the disease is over. There is more work to do to not only overcome the diabetes epidemic, but also eliminate the healthcare disparities that disproportionately

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especially for communities of color.

While the CDC report is good news regarding an overall decline in diabetes rates, it did not acknowledge a significant change in prevalence among the African-American community.

Consider the data: Black adults are about twice as likely to have diagnosed diabetes as non-Hispanic White adults. They are also twice as likely to die from the disease. What's more, African Americans are more than three times as likely to suffer from health complications related to diabetes, such as lower-limb amputation and kidney failure.

plague our community.

To do that, we must redouble our efforts to create a culture of health in African American communities—one that removes the stigma of seeking care and helps our neighbors and family members access the opportunities provided under the Affordable Care Act. Healthcare.gov is now available for the open enrollment period through January 31, 2016, and taking advantage of the options available today is the first step our community can take to reclaim Black health and wellness.

But coverage alone isn't enough to

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Getting Ready for Back-to-School Vaccines

By *The Portland Clinic*

As we move into the second half of summer, parents across the Pacific Northwest are gearing up for back-to-school season. In addition to purchasing school supplies, booking that last Oregon Coast weekend and soaking up all the sun possible (while safely covered in sunscreen, of course), it is important to make sure “update the kids’ immunizations” is on your to-do list.

We know the issue of vaccinations can be a heated topic with passionate viewpoints, but immunizations are one of the most effective and inexpensive forms of medicine available. There are very few absolute reasons not to vaccinate. The most prominent is if your child has a weakened immune system due to an existing health condition. If

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you have concerns about vaccinating your child, we are happy to discuss them with you during your visit and we strongly encourage you to speak with your doctor about the appropriate approach to keep them healthy.

While every patient and family is different, the doctors and nurses at The Portland Clinic recommend the immunization schedule published by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the American Committee on Immunization Practices, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). August is National Immunization Month, and an ideal time to review some of the basic facts about vaccines and why they are so important.

What Is a Vaccine?

A vaccine is a medical substance injected, ingested or inhaled to help stimulate production of antibodies and build immunity against potentially damaging or fatal diseases. It works by introducing significantly weakened agents of the disease into the body, causing the patient to build a defense against the ailment. Vaccines switch on the immune system to make the body more resistant to future attack by that particular virus or bacteria.

Herd Immunity

While vaccines are given to each individual patient, they also serve to protect the community as a whole through something called “herd immunity.” When enough members of a population are vaccinated against a specific disease, it decreases the likelihood of anyone in that community contracting the illness. While not perfect prevention, opting to vaccinate can be a vital contribution to the health of the greater PDX community.

Get the Facts

As much as we focus on childhood vaccines, there are circumstances—if you are traveling abroad, for example — where vaccinations are needed at any age. The CDC has a variety of materials available on its website you can use to research the recommended vaccines for you and your family, whether you're taking a trip, pregnant, starting school, etc.

For the appropriate schedules for immunizations go to www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read.

Again, we recognize that vaccinations are a critical piece of your personal healthcare and should be discussed with your doctor. If you have more questions or would like to speak with one of our physicians about vaccinations for yourself or a loved one, please call The Portland Clinic at 503-223-3113 or visit ThePortlandClinic.com to schedule an appointment.

FIESTA
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11am - 1pm
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- make fun crafts
- face painting
- mariachi music

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