

# You FIRST

Your Month of Well-being

August 2023

## National Immunization Awareness Month

When was the last time you checked to see whether your immune system is up to date? August is National Immunization Awareness Month and a great time to raise awareness about the importance of keeping current on vaccinations. Take the first step to protect yourself from potentially harmful diseases by giving your doctor a call to check your immunization status!

### Vaccine Basics

- A vaccine helps your body **defend itself against harmful diseases** by building up resistance to specific disease producing bacteria and viruses.
- A **vaccine** is made from very small amounts of weak or dead germs that can cause diseases — for example, viruses, bacteria, or toxins. It prepares your body to fight the disease faster and more effectively, so you won't get sick.
- Vaccines work by imitating an **infection** to engage the body's natural defenses. The active ingredient in all vaccines is an **antigen**, the name for any substance that causes the immune system to begin producing antibodies.
- Vaccines are typically **injected, given orally, or sprayed into your nose** to initiate your body's production of antibodies.
- There are two types of immunity, active and passive. **Active immunity** can be acquired through natural or vaccine-induced immunity. **Passive immunity** is provided when someone is given antibodies to a disease rather than producing them through their own immune system. (Ex: a newborn baby)

[Types of Immunity to a Disease | CDC](#)

[National Immunization Awareness Month \(NIAM\) | CDC](#)

### Benefits of Vaccinations

- In the United States, vaccines have been instrumental in **reducing the risk of disease** in infants, children, and adults.
- When enough people in a population are immune to an infectious disease, the disease is then unlikely to spread from person to person. This is known as **community immunity**.
- Getting vaccinated also indirectly helps **protect others who are vulnerable to disease** such as babies, children, the elderly, people with weak immune systems, cancer patients, and other people who cannot be vaccinated for medical reasons.
- **What vaccines do you need?** Click [here](#) to find out! Be sure to discuss the suggested list with your primary care physician. *\*This assessment tool applies to adults 19 years or older.*

For information on pediatric and pre-teen/teen vaccinations, click [here!](#)



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## The Seasonal Flu

- **The annual vaccination:** The best way to reduce your risk from seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get vaccinated every year. Since the flu strains vary from year to year, getting a seasonal vaccine helps ensure you are protected from the influenza virus that will be most prevalent during the upcoming season (fall and winter).
- **Healthy flu prevention habits:** During flu season, avoid close contact with people who are sick, if you become sick, be sure to stay home to avoid spreading germs to others, cover your coughs and sneezes, and wash your hands with soap and water or use an alcohol-based hand rub.
- **Steps to take if you do get the flu:** If you get very sick and are at [high-risk](#) for flu-related complications, be sure to reach out to your doctor for guidance. Stay home and rest, avoid close contact with well people in your household so that you will not make them sick, and drink plenty of fluids to prevent dehydration.
- **How to properly care for someone with the flu:** When caring for someone with the flu, avoid being face-to-face with the sick person if possible, when holding sick children- place their chin on your shoulder so they will not cough in your face, and [wash your hands often and right away!](#)

### Join CareFirst WellBeing<sup>SM</sup> Today!

CareFirst WellBeing is your personalized digital connection to your healthiest life.

Ready to take charge of your health? Visit [www.carefirst.com/wellbeing](http://www.carefirst.com/wellbeing) to log in to or register for your account.

### CareFirst Resources

- **Health Topics:** Looking for more information on vaccinations or cold/flu? Check out the *Health Topics* section in your [CareFirst WellBeing platform!](#) Click *Discover* > *Health Topics* to get up to date information on your timeline.
- **CloseKnit:** A virtual-first primary care practice offering care 24/7/365. Download the easy-to-use app and get started today [Virtual-First Primary Care | CloseKnit \(closeknithealth.com\)](#).

## Blue365 Featured Deal for August

One great way to [Achieve a Healthier You](#) is to take advantage of the Blue365 Health and Wellness discount program provided to insured CareFirst members (includes those with medical, dental, vision and disability).

Kickstart your immune system with a nutritious smoothie! Fuel your day with \$25 off nutrient rich smoothies made with organic fruits, vegetables, and seeds plus free shipping on your first box. Click [here](#) for more information!

### Upcoming FREE Mental Health First Aid Trainings

Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among adults. CareFirst is excited to have partnered with EveryMind to offer **FREE and VIRTUAL** Mental Health First Aid Training to our clients and members. **Space is limited**, with a 30-participant maximum in each virtual session. This will be a **first come first serve opportunity**. Click the links below to register!

Friday, October 6<sup>th</sup>: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E45ACAE2EA7F8C70-106>

Tuesday, October 24<sup>th</sup>: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E45ACAE2EA7F8C70-1024>

Thursday, November 16<sup>th</sup>: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E45ACAE2EA7F8C70-1116>

Wednesday, November 29<sup>th</sup>: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E45ACAE2EA7F8C70-1129>