

Kups Corner

In The News: Measles Outbreaks

You have probably seen or heard that there have been new cases of measles reported in the United States. As of February 2019, there have been more than 127 confirmed cases of measles in 10 states. The recent measles outbreak has primarily occurred in the Northwest portion of the country, but there are now cases in many other states. This outbreak has primarily occurred in people who have not been vaccinated against measles. We do not routinely vaccinate children for measles until their first birthday, so children who are exposed before that time are at high risk if they come into contact with someone who has measles.

Additionally, there are people who have medical conditions that do not allow them to receive this vaccine and therefore put them at high risk of getting measles if exposed.

Measles is caused by a virus and is extremely contagious. It is spread in the air when an infected person sneezes or coughs. Measles virus can live for up to 2 hours on surfaces where someone who is infected has coughed or sneezed. Therefore, exposures can occur when traveling or in any crowded setting.

Measles used to be one of the most common childhood infections until a vaccine was first introduced in 1963. Prior to the vaccine, nearly all children contracted measles by the time they turned 15. There were 3-4 million cases of new infections each year prior to the introduction of the vaccine. Of those new measles infections, there were 400-500 deaths, 48,000 hospitalizations, and 1,000 cases of encephalitis (inflammation of the brain). Measles is a serious and potentially deadly infection.

We have a vaccine that has been proven to be safe and effective that can prevent this infection. Sadly, there has been a great deal of misinformation about the measles vaccine (specifically the MMR vaccine) that has led people to choose to not vaccinate their children. This vaccine has been extensively studied and proven in numerous studies to be safe and effective. Despite an overwhelming amount of scientific evidence



Kup's Corner is the quarterly newsletter of Quincy Pediatrics and is dedicated to the memory of Dr. Steven Kuperstein, our friend and colleague, whose absence is felt everyday.

proving its safety, there are still people who choose not to believe this. It is for this reason that we are still having outbreaks of measles in this country. Our office takes every precaution to protect your children from illness. We strongly recommend that all patients receive the recommended vaccines, following the American Academy of Pediatrics vaccination schedule. We recommend that you vaccinate your child against measles with the MMR vaccine at the age of 1 year and again at 4 years. Vaccines save lives. Help us keep your child safe. Just like you would never put your child in the car without a safety seat, don't allow them to be unprotected from diseases for which we have vaccines to protect them.

Anemia- What is this and how do I prevent it?

Anemia is a condition where there is not enough hemoglobin in the blood. This can occur because the body is not making enough red blood cells, the body is destroying red blood cells, or because someone is losing red blood cells due to bleeding. One of the most common reasons for anemia in children is an inadequate amount of iron in the diet. Iron is a necessary component of red blood cells. The best dietary sources of iron are any meats, green leafy vegetables, eggs, beans, tomatoes, and raisins. Eating foods with Vitamin C (like citrus fruits) will help

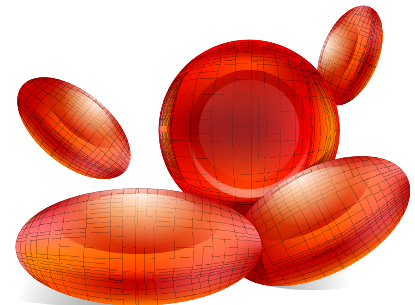
your body absorb iron when you eat it. It is also important to avoid giving too much milk in the diet, as this can lead to anemia, especially in toddlers. We recommend giving 12-20 oz. of milk daily to children between the ages of 1 and 2 years old. For children over 2 years old, 12 oz. of milk a day is adequate, along with other dietary sources of calcium.

What are signs of anemia?

Fatigue, pale skin, and feeling weak. More severe anemia can also cause increased heart rate, shortness of breath, and dizziness.

Is my child checked for anemia?

We check your child's hemoglobin level at routine check-ups to evaluate for anemia. We do this initially at the 2 month check-up and then again at the 1 year check-up. The hemoglobin level is then checked annually. This is one of the many important reasons that your child needs to come in for an annual check-up. Make sure your child is up to date for his annual physical.



Is your Child's Annual Exam Up-to-Date?

Remember that Physicals and Health Forms are only valid for one year, so if your Child has not had a physical within the past year we will be unable to give a health form until they are up to date.

Call today and get their appointment scheduled!!!

What do I need to know about E-cigarettes and Vaping?

Vaping and E-cigarettes have become ubiquitous. There are advertisements for them everywhere you look.



What are they? E-cigarettes are devices that produce an aerosolized mixture that contains a number of different products. These products may include nicotine, flavored liquids, and sometimes marijuana. They come in a large variety of devices including vape pens, Juuls, and other devices that are designed to look more like traditional cigarettes.

Are they safe? No! The devices that contain nicotine are highly addictive. The adolescent brain is still developing and is particularly vulnerable to

the addictive nature of nicotine. Many of the solutions that e-cigarettes use contain harmful chemicals like antifreeze and other carcinogens. The American Academy of Pediatrics strongly recommends preventing all children and adolescents from using these products.

In addition, there are an increasing number of reports of poisonings of younger children after ingesting the liquid from e-cigarettes. A child can be killed by a very small amount of nicotine--less than half a teaspoon. Exposure can occur both by ingestion and by exposure on the skin. Keep these products locked up! It is not safe to smoke these products near your children. Never smoke these indoors or in your car.

E-cigarettes are the most commonly used tobacco product by teens. In 2018, over 20% of high school students reported using e-cigarettes in the past month. There is evidence that teens who use e-cigarettes are more likely to start smoking regular cigarettes. Did you know that teens can often order these products online? Massachusetts recently increased the minimum age to buy e-cigarettes to 21, but kids are bypassing this restriction and ordering them online. Talk to your kids today about the dangers of vaping!





Question and Answer: My baby sounds congested. How do I know if she is sick?

It is very common for infants to sound congested or to make loud noises from their noses. Infants have very small noses, which can easily become clogged with mucous. It is especially common during the winter months for babies to sound congested during the night due to the dry air from the heat. We recommend using nasal saline and a bulb suction or nose Frida to remove nasal mucous.

If your child has nasal congestion, we suggest looking for other signs of illness. Does your child have a cough? Does she have a fever? For all infants under the age of 12 months, it is most accurate to check for a fever rectally. For infants under 3 months, a fever is any temperature 100.4 or higher. For a child this age, a fever may be the only sign of illness. You should call our office for *any* fever in a child under 3 months. For babies over 3 months, fever is a temperature of 101 or higher. For children 3 months and older, call our office if you are concerned about your child's temperature.

In addition to cough and fever, children who are ill will often have poor feeding or fussiness. Please give our office a call if you are concerned that your child is ill. If your baby's only symptom is congestion, then we suggest trying the nasal saline and suctioning. If this does not help resolve the congestion, then give our office a call for further help.

DID YOU KNOW?

You can access your child's HealthForms & Immunization reports, request appointments & prescription refills and more from **HOME!!!**

Sign-up for **Patient Gateway** TODAY! Stop by the Front Desk to be enrolled on the spot.

Quincy Pediatric Associates

191 Independence Ave
Quincy, MA 02169
and
769 Plain Street
Marshfield, MA 02050

Phone:
617-773-5070 (Quincy)
781-837-5070 (Marshfield)

Office hours:
Monday-Friday:
Quincy & Marshfield:
8:30am-Noon and 1:15pm- 5:30pm

Evening Sick Hours
by Appointment:
Available in Quincy Office until
7:30p.m.

Saturday:
Quincy Office :
9am-noon and
1:00pm- 4pm

Sunday:
Quincy office:
Available for sick visits starting at
11am

Call Hour:
Physician available by phone
Everyday 7am-8am

Please call the office if you need to schedule a sick or acute visit for your child.

www.quincypeds.com