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Fall 2012 Newsletter

Flu Immunization

It is time to talk about influenza again. Influenza is a virus that causes high fevers, body aches, cough, and/or vomiting. The symptoms can last up to 10 days. The best way to protect yourself and your child from influenza is to be vaccinated against it. The CDC recommends that everyone be vaccinated. The recommendation to vaccinate all children is based on 1) the accumulated evidence that the vaccine is safe and effective, 2) increasing evidence that influenza disease has an adverse impact on the children and their families, and 3) expectation that a simplified age-based influenza vaccine recommendation for all children and adolescents will improve vaccine coverage levels among children who already have a risk- or contact-based indication for annual influenza vaccination. Children 6 months-9 years, who did not receive the influenza vaccine last year, will need 2 doses of seasonal flu vaccine this year. We currently have flu mist and flu shots. Contact our office to schedule your appointment to get vaccinated.

Obesity-Associated Metabolic Syndrome in Teens Linked to Cognitive and Brain Problems

As childhood obesity has dramatically increased in the U.S., so has the prevalence of metabolic syndrome. Metabolic syndrome is a constellation of health problems including insulin resistance, hypertension, and high cholesterol. In adults, metabolic syndrome has been linked to cognitive problems. A new study just published this fall has documented even more extensive brain impairments in adolescents with metabolic syndrome. The study compared 49 adolescents with metabolic syndrome to 62 teens without the disorder matched on socioeconomic factors. Those with metabolic syndrome had significantly lower arithmetic, spelling, attention and mental flexibility. Study authors conclude that obesity-associated metabolic dysregulation, short of diabetes, may also cause brain complications during adolescence. They suggest brain function should be included when considering early treatment for childhood obesity. More research will be done to determine whether the reductions in cognitive performance and structural brain abnormalities are reversible with significant weight loss.

Gastroenteritis

Unfortunately, we have already seen lots of people with the stomach bug. We would all like to give it a permanent eviction notice but it doesn't seem to like that idea. If your child is vomiting, give them stomach rest. Once they have not vomited for one hour, start with sips of clear liquids. Pedialyte is the best fluid to give anyone with vomiting. Smaller amounts are better tolerated (for example for a 1 yr old, give 1 tablespoon every 5 minutes for 1 hr). If the child is able to keep the smaller amounts down, you can slowly increase to a larger amount (2 tablespoons every 5 minutes). A bland diet should be followed for several days. It was okay if your child is not interested in eating for several days. Drinking is much more important so he or she does not get dehydrated. Most children also develop diarrhea. The diarrhea can last for up to 2 weeks, especially in the younger children. Once the child is tolerating solid foods, you can give them yogurt or over the counter probiotics. These help restore the normal bacteria in your stomach and slow down the diarrhea.

Don't forget **Premier Pediatrics** is on the web at www.premierforkids.com, facebook, and twitter. Our website has a medication dosage link and a symptoms/diagnosis link. We encourage you to use them.