



To The Point February 2009

## The Ladies Probus Club of Charlestown Immunisation Facts

### **Immunisation Saves Lives!**

Immunisation has saved more lives than any other public health intervention ever, other than introduction of clean water.

Immunisation is a whole-of-life commitment which continues to protect you all your life!

Keep records of your vaccinations or at least write down what doctor has your records.

### **Influenza ('Flu) Vaccine**

This vaccine should be recommended to anyone who wants to avoid the disease. It is especially important for:

- The elderly aged 65 years and over (free); Aboriginal individuals aged >15 years (free)
- Pregnant women; partners of pregnant women, grand-parents
- Healthcare workers; childcarers, teachers
- Anyone in contact with the elderly or sick, infants or pregnant women

Parents should be advised to keeping coughing people away from their baby!

### **Pertussis Vaccine (Whooping cough)**

- Pertussis vaccine is very important for all Australian adults. 2008 saw the worse year for pertussis in many years.
- A booster should last at least 5 years if you have had a course of pertussis vaccine as a child. However, many adult Australians did not complete the course of vaccine as a child and so should receive 3 doses of Boostrix or Adacel vaccine at least 1 month apart.
- The best gift you can give a newborn baby is to buy yourself a pertussis vaccine.

### **Pneumococcal Vaccine**

This vaccine protects you against 23 types of pneumococcal (bacteria) disease, which is often the cause of pneumonia in elderly Australians:

- First dose at age 65 years (50 if Aboriginal)
- 2<sup>nd</sup> dose 5 years after first dose

### **Overseas travel**

- Prepare well in advance; see your doctor as soon as you know where you are heading
- Ensure all vaccines are up-to-date – Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (dTpa), measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), influenza for current year, travel vaccines
- Do not rely on vaccination to fully protect you; take other sensible precautions
- Phone you doctor if you have a fever after returning from OS.

### **Family**

2, 4, 6, 12 & 18 months and 4 years - DTPa, Hep B, Hib, polio, rotavirus, MMR, meningococcal C, Hib, varicella (chicken pox)

12 years (at school) - Human papillomavirus vaccine, varicella, hep B (Y7), DTPa (Y10)

15 years Booster DTPa vaccine4 (from GP if not at school)

65 years (50 yrs if Aboriginal) – Influenza, pneumococcal vaccines

**Coming** – Zoster vaccine to reduce the pain and frequency of shingles