



COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 27, 2005

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AUGUST IS NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH *Observance Seeks to Remind People to Make Sure They Have Needed Shots*

Despite the availability of safe and effective vaccines, cases of infectious diseases continue to occur in San Diego County annually – diseases that could be prevented by immunization.

The County of San Diego Health and Human Services Agency (HHS) is joining with other organizations throughout the country in observing August as National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). The annual campaign theme, "Are You Up to Date? Vaccinate!" reminds persons of all ages about the importance of immunization.

"Immunizations are one of public health's greatest successes," said Nancy Bowen, M.D., County Public Health Officer. "With the exception of safe water, no other health strategy, not even antibiotics, has had such a tremendous effect on reducing disease and improving health."

However, vaccine-preventable diseases still occur right here in San Diego County, affecting children, adolescents and adults, she said. For instance, some 124 cases of pertussis (whooping cough) were reported in the county during the first half of the year.

In August, parents are enrolling children in school, older students are entering college and adults and the healthcare community are preparing for the upcoming flu season. This makes August a particularly good time to focus community attention on the value of immunization.

HHS encourages people of all ages to learn more about the recommended vaccines, and to make sure that they are up-to-date. For more information on immunizations, please visit www.immunization-sd.org, or call toll free at (888) 692-2575.

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