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We hope that this letter finds you and your family in excellent health. This is a newsletter for our patients aged 50 and over as some recommendations regarding adult vaccines have been updated.

IMMUNIZATIONS

Please ensure that your immunizations are up to date. Adults are recommended to continue with TETANUS immunization every 10 years. Additionally, for those over 65 years it is recommended that you consider a PNEUMOVAX immunization to protect against the more common types of community acquired pneumonia.

Other immunizations are now available. These many or may not be covered by OHIP, depending on your age, medical history, etc. However, most of them would be covered by third party health plans.

PREVNAR 13 – The National Advisory Committee of Immunization (NACI) recommends Prevnar 13 to all 65+ to protect against pneumococcal pneumonia and other invasive diseases. It may also be indicated (and covered by OHIP) for adults 50+ (please ask MD).

ZOSTAVAX – NACI recommends Zostavax adults 60+ (without contraindications) to reduce the risk and severity of shingles and post-herpetic neuralgia (the pain that can persist after a bout of shingles). It may also be given to 50+ year olds. NACI recommends it for people aged 50+ with diabetes. It is covered by OHIP for those 65-70 years of age.

TWINRIX – To protect against Hepatitis A and B. This is generally considered a travel vaccine. In the USA, the CDC and ADA recommends Twinrix for people with diabetes who are less than 60 years.

PREVENTATIVE SCREENING

Cancer Care Ontario recommends the following screening tests for average risk patients:

Women: Pap smears every 3 years, starting at age 21 until age 69, to screen for cervical cancer
Mammograms age 50-74, every 2 years to screen for breast cancer

Women and Men: FOBT (fecal occult blood test) for age 50-74 to screen for colon cancer

WALK-IN CLINICS

A REMINDER THAT WE ASK YOU TO AVOID WALK-IN CLINICS. For many reasons we want to provide care for you in our office and we ask that you **AVOID** walk-in clinics. While there may be times that you feel you have to use a walk-in clinic, please be aware that there are associated costs and consequences when you do. Please keep in mind that your medical care can be negatively compromised when you use a walk-in clinic not associated with our group. Continuity of medical care is extremely important and it breaks down when you use a walk in clinic as they very rarely send us information pertaining to your visit. Walk in clinic visits can also result in unnecessary duplication of testing and additional costs to a financially strained health care system. For those patients registered to our group, the Ministry of Health actually deducts the cost of your walk in clinic visit from our salary, and so we are appreciative of your loyalty accessing care through our office and our after hours clinics. Please call our office first as we have same-day appointments available for acute medical issues. Otherwise, call **(905) 635-2344** to find out the location of the doctor on call.