


News from Northside Family Medicine!



Saturday appointments are coming this week!

Starting this Saturday November 6th we will be opening the first and third Saturdays of November and December . We have heard from many about the desire to have the appointments available. We are trying it out on a temporary basis so make sure you take advantage of it! For now, the hours will be from 9AM to noon. If all goes well we will try expanding it to every Saturday- so thanks for your comments and we will continue to look for ways to serve you better!

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An epidemic (of sorts) in the news- Pertussis (whooping cough) is making a deadly rebound.

This year has marked a resurgence in Pertussis. California has seen the largest outbreak this year with over 5200 cases of pertussis and 9 deaths. This is the largest outbreak in the last 60 years. While not as common in Colorado, the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) reports that September of this year saw 46 cases of pertussis in 18 different counties compared to the September average of only 14 cases in only 7 counties.

Why is pertussis important?

For a healthy adult and most children over the age of 1 it is not too serious of an illness other than the nuisance of a cough that can last up to 3 months. The milder nature of the symptoms in some people though is the main problem though because and they can pass it along to infants and the elderly where it can cause significant problems. In these high risk groups it can lead to pneumonia, seizures, long term neurological problems and rarely, death. (Source- CDPHE)

What is pertussis?

Bordatella pertussis (whooping cough) is a bacterial infection that mostly affects the lungs and respiratory system. The classic symptoms of it include a characteristic cough, usually in coughing fits, that can be quite severe and sometimes come with the whooping sound. Symptoms include vomiting, breathlessness, and change in facial color. The disease rarely causes a significant fever. The main issues for adults and older children is a persistent cough that can last around 3 months. (Source- CDC)

How do you catch pertussis?

It is very contagious disease that is spread by exposure to infected individuals that are coughing or sneezing. The main problem is that it is spread easily amongst healthier individuals who may not have

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first make sure you are familiar and

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www.northsidefamned.com!

Meningitis- a deadly illness that has been in the news

Symptoms and Risks with Meningitis

While the risk of getting meningitis is very low, the dangers of it are very high. There are between 1000 to 1200 diagnosed cases of bacterial meningitis yearly. Even with antibiotics it is fatal within 48 hours or so in 10-15 percent of people. The recent hockey game in the Fort Collins area that lead to 3 or 4 cases of meningitis brought it back in the spotlight. Some classic signs include rash, high fever (103 and above), stiff neck, headache, and even nausea and vomiting. If you have any concerns immediate evaluation at an emergency room is critical as early treatment is important to increase the chance of success. (source- CDC website)

What can be done to prevent meningitis?

many symptoms but when it is caught by infants or the elderly significant issues can develop. It usually takes 7-10 days to develop symptoms after exposure but can take up to 6 weeks. (Source- CDC website)

Why are there more cases of Pertussis lately?

A lot of this stems from a lower rate of immunizations of our children and the fact that most adults have lost their immunity against pertussis as the effectiveness of our childhood immunizations has worn off with time. The other issue is that infants don't develop a great protection to pertussis until around 6 months if they received all 3 of their immunizations at the right time. This information just confirms the importance of keeping up with regular immunizations and well child checks to improve the protection for your infant children. In 2005, a new tetanus shot that also included pertussis was developed for older children and adults making pertussis protection available for all people under the age of 64 (studies are being conducted to extend this to patients above 64).

What are the recommendations for immunizations?

Infants should be immunized with a DTAP at 2,4,6 months and then between 15-18 months. Then children should be immunized again with DTAP at 4-6 years. This is followed by one more shot of Tdap at age 11-12 and if the child has not been given that shot then a catch up shot should be done at some point between ages 13-18.

For Adults anyone who has not received a Tdap should get one. Recently, the CDC recommended getting an immunization with a Tdap as soon as possible even if you got a regular tetanus in the last 1-2 years. The potential for a localized reaction increases if there is less time between a previous tetanus shot and a Tdap but the recommendation has been lowered due to the recent pertussis epidemics. Those who should especially consider a Tdap is any adult who will be in contact with an infant regularly. For those of you who aren't sure if you got a Tdap or a tetanus shot you can call our office to

Again there is a vaccine that significantly reduces the chances of meningitis. It is recommended by the CDC for all children at ages 11-12 and if not done should be done between ages 13-18. Anytime where someone will be in close quarters with larger populations such as college dormitories and barracks in the armed forces the risk of spread is especially high. We do have the immunization so please call to schedule a time if you need it. (source- CDC website)

How do you catch meningitis?

It is usually spread by close contact or by sharing respiratory or throat secretions. It can be transmitted from a healthy individual who has the bacteria but no symptoms which is the reason why a clear source is not always identifiable. (source- CDC website- note CDC and CDPHE are sources for majority of information in this newsletter)

A thanks to our loyal fans!

In a recent independent evaluation that compared our clinic to practices nationwide in a blinded patient satisfaction survey (which means some of you

check and keep in mind that if it was before 2005 it was just a regular tetanus shot and you should get a Tdap with pertussis protection.

What can I do to prevent Pertussis?

Immunization is the best way to prevent it so please contact us if you would like to arrange an immunization. Anyone with an active cough and or sneezing should regularly wash hands and cover their mouth to prevent transmission and while immunizations are very effective they do not work 100% of the time. Also if you are concerned about potential pertussis exposure, coming in for an evaluation as soon as possible would be a good idea as antibiotics can help prevent a full blown infection.

How do I know I have Pertussis?

Diagnosis between this and the common cold can be difficult but early evaluation is key. Not all pertussis has the characteristic whooping sound making it more difficult.. Early diagnosis is possible through lab tests that can be arranged. In order to prevent the long duration cough early treatment is required as antibiotics after 1-3 weeks of symptoms may not stop the prolonged cough. If you would like to hear some characteristic coughs with pertussis check out the following website.

<http://www.whoopingcough.net/symptoms.htm>

How do you treat pertussis?

Antibiotics are the key to treatment but early diagnosis is important to prevent the long cough and duration of symptoms.

Who gets pertussis?

Any age person can get it and while it is usually more of an annoyance for adults it can be a serious issue for both infants and the elderly. Due to the easy spreading of the disease, treatment and early diagnosis are key.

filled out these surveys sent to you by an independent company), we averaged in the 93rd percentile for all aspects of the survey. This survey compared us to primary care offices across the country in areas such as access to care, staff care, provider quality, and satisfaction with the overall visit. Thanks for your trust and support!

Online scheduling and same day appointments a big hit at Northside Family Medicine.

Many of our patients are already taking advantage of online scheduling. If you forget to call during office hours or run into a problem in the middle of the night and want to make sure you get an appointment the next day you can schedule it online. Even if an appointment isn't available online just call us after 830AM and before 3PM on a normal business day and we'll get you in that day. Any time of the day just go to our website

www.northsidefammed.com

and follow the easy instructions to schedule online any time.

More newsletters are on the way!

This is our Fifth newsletter and we are trying to touch on important topics for lots of our patients. But please let us know if you have other thoughts or things you would like to include. We'd love to hear from you!

The greatest compliment you could ever give us is the referral of your family and friends. We thank you for your trust. Northside Family Medicine

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from ac- up to 4/15/10 last 18 months



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