

The Casa Alegre Buzz

Casa Alegre Pediatrics

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First Edition

Casa Alegre Pediatrics is proud to bring you the first edition of our quarterly newsletter.

We'll be updating you on our office, families, and of course the latest news and medicine in pediatrics.

As an added resource we encourage you to check out www.casaalegripediatrics.com, where we hope you'll find useful links on both general pediatric topics and specific

diseases such as asthma, autism, prematurity, etc.

Our office library also serves as a



great resource. We have books that can be checked out and a computer in the office available for patient use. If there is a topic you are

interested in that is not covered, please let us know.

We hope you enjoy our publication and we welcome your feedback and suggestions for next quarter's topics.

Sincerely,

The doctors and staff at Casa Alegre Pediatrics

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100% Immunization Rate!

Casa Alegre is a proud participant in the effort to vaccinate children with Vaccines for Children Program. In 2004 we had an immunization rate of 96%.

However, the office recently had its annual October 2005 audit and we are proud to announce a 100% Immunization rate this year.

Our congratulations to Christina and all her

hard work making sure our children are immunized!

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Practices that receive their vaccines from the state are audited annually by HEDIS.





“Death from RSV is greater in infants than from Influenza”

RSV

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a virus commonly seen in the wintertime. In adults and older children it can cause runny nose, congestion, sore throat, and prolonged cough. In children less than 1 year of age and up to 2 years of age it can cause significant illness with complications. Death from RSV is greater in infants than from Influenza virus. RSV tends to cause an illness called bronchiolitis in infants. Infants can develop difficulty breathing, wheezing, fever, irritability, ear infections, prolonged cough for weeks to months, and poor feeding. Some infants, but not all need to be hospitalized for oxygen therapy, closer monitoring,

intravenous fluids, and sometimes even support from breathing machines. Babies less than 2 months of age may present with apnea (cessation of breathing for 20 seconds or more or hypoxia with cessation of breathing). Studies have shown children who have had RSV are more likely to wheeze in the future.

Testing: There is a test using secretions from the nose for RSV. This is not always done because the results have no effect on treatment options.

Treatment: RSV is a virus so antibiotics will not help with the illness, unless they have developed complications. Most care is directed at helping the child feel better,

such as suctioning the nose. Some children who have wheezing do respond to albuterol, however the majority won't. Your doctor may give a trial of albuterol to check for response. For premature infants there is a shot available that must be given monthly, Synagis. If you have a premature infant talk to your doctor if they have not already discussed this with you. No one, not even adults, develops immunity to this virus.

Prevention: You can decrease the risk for your infant by minimizing their exposure to large crowds, especially during the winter-time/holidays. Use good hand-washing techniques, especially when out of the home and if someone is ill in the house. See prevention under Influenza section.

Influenza

It's that season again. Many people talk about the flu, worry about getting the flu; even think that they have the flu during the winter season. What is the flu (Influenza)? The flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by a group of influenza viruses. It can cause a range of mild to severe illness. Five to 20% of the population gets the flu. Approximately 200,000 people are hospitalized from flu complications every year.

Complications:

- bacterial pneumonia
- dehydration
- sinus infections
- ear infections
- worsening of chronic medical conditions; such as asthma, congestive heart failure, or diabetes.

How is it spread? The Flu virus is spread in respiratory droplets caused by coughing and sneezing. They usually spread from person to person. Some people can become infected by touching something a

person with the flu virus has touched leaving droplets, then touching their mouth or nose.

Preventing the Flu:

1. The flu shot is a vaccine containing killed virus that is given as an injection. It protects against flu viruses that are predicted to be more common during that season. (It does not protect against influenza-like illnesses caused by other viruses. (See who should get the vaccine)
2. The nasal spray flu vaccine- is a vaccine made with live, weakened flu viruses that do not cause the flu. It is approved for healthy people 5 to 49 years of age who are not pregnant.
3. Avoid close contact with people who are sick, or keep your distance if you are sick.
4. Stay home when you are sick, if possible.
5. Cover your mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing with a

tissue or using your arm/elbow. Studies have shown people who use their hands, will touch an object depositing their germs on the object they touch.

6. Clean your hands. Washing your hands often will protect you from germs. It is recommended to wash your hands with soap under hot water for 15 seconds at least (the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday").
7. Avoid touching your eyes, nose or mouth.

Symptoms of the flu:

- fever
- runny/ stuffy nose
- headache
- muscle aches
- dry cough
- extreme tiredness
- sore throat
- sore throat
- Stomach symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhea, more common in children than adults

Who should get vaccinated?

1. **People at high risk for complications:**
 - People ≥ 65 years
 - Adults and children with chronic heart or lung conditions (including asthma).
 - Adults and children who were hospitalized or needed regular medical care the year prior (diabetes, chronic kidney disease, HIV) .
 - Children 6 months to 18 years on long-term aspirin therapy
 - Women pregnant during flu season
 - children 6-23 months of age .
 - conditions that can compromise breathing or handling of secretions(such as seizures, tracheostomies, etc.).
2. **People 50 to 64 years of age**
3. **People who can transmit flu to others at high risk for complications.**

See our Website for information on the Asian Bird Flu.

Holidays

The holidays are an exciting time of year for kids, but can be a stressful and dangerous time as well.



Happy Visiting

- Many family members and homes you visit may not be child-proofed. Keep an eye out for danger spots.
- Family members may keep medications in locations accessible to kids. Keep an eye out, this is a high time for accidental poisonings.
- Traveling, visiting, and shopping can increase stress levels. Sticking to usual routines can help you and your child enjoy the holidays and reduce stress.
- Clean up immediately after a party. A toddler can rise early and choke on leftover food or come in contact with alcohol or tobacco.
- Ask about guns in homes your children are going to visit. If there is a gun, make sure it is in a gun safe with ammunition locked separately, or is made unusable with a gun lock.

Lights

- Before using lights outdoors, check labels to be sure they are certified for outdoor use.
- Check all tree lights, even if you just purchased them before hanging them on your tree. Make sure all bulbs work and there are no frayed wires, broken sockets, or loose connections.
- Turn off all lights when you go to bed or leave the house. The lights could short out and start a fire.



Trees

- Make sure when purchasing an artificial tree that it is labeled Fire Resistant.
- When purchasing a live tree, check for freshness because a fresh tree is less of a fire hazard. The tree should be green, needles difficult to pull from branches, and when bent between your fingers, needles do not break. The trunk butt should be sticky with resin. When tapped on the ground, the tree should not lose many needles.
- Cut a few inches off the trunk of your tree to expose the fresh wood. This allows better water absorption.
- When setting up your tree, place it away from fireplaces, radiators, or portable heaters. Place the tree out of the way of traffic and don't allow it to block doorways.

Holiday tips continued page 6.

New Additions

Dr. Cynthia Rivas Settles

Dr. Cynthia R. Settles joined the office in late September. A native of La Mesa, New Mexico, she attended Las Cruces High and New Mexico State University.

After graduating NMSU with her bachelors she moved to Albuquerque to attend medical school at the University of New Mexico.

Dr. Settles and her husband Jeremy then made a big move to Austin, Texas for her residency in pediatrics. While there she was honored to serve as the Chief Resident of Pediatrics. After residency, she was asked to stay on and join the hospitalist group for Children's

Hospital of Austin as Faculty.

Dr. Settles and her husband Jeremy decided to move back home to Las Cruces (along with their two Great Danes!), to be closer to their families. Her husband's family owns a local dairy and grew up in the Las Cruces area as well.

Dr. Settles and Dr. Ray will be working as partners and helping each other out if an urgent appointment is needed as well as sharing hospital rounds.



Welcome Maria!

If you think Christina looks a little different you're not seeing things!

Starting December 1st you will see another new addition to Casa Alegre Pedi-

atrics. Maria Rios will be joining the staff. She will be working primarily as Dr. Settles' nurse. Maria has had several years experience working in the medical field. You may

see her with Christina as she trains in office procedures.

We hope you will join us in welcoming her into our family.



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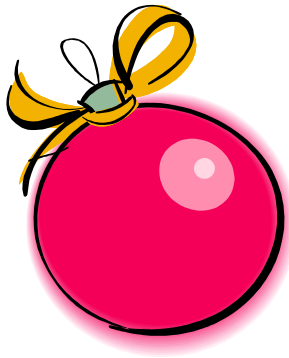
We're on the Web

www.casaalegropediatrics.com

Sources

1. Centers for Disease control and prevention-Influenza www.cdc.gov
2. American Academy of Pediatrics www.aap.org
3. Clinical Insights in Pediatric Respiratory Care September 2005

Holidays continued



Decorations

- Use only non-combustible or flame-resistant materials to trim a tree. Choose tinsel or icicles of plastic or nonleaded metals.
- Never use lighted candles on a tree or near other evergreens. Always use non-flammable holders, and place candles where they will not be knocked down.
- In homes with small

children, take special care to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable, keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children to avoid the child swallowing or inhaling small pieces. Avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food that may tempt a child to eat them. Remove all wrapping papers, bags, paper, ribbons, and bows from tree and

fireplace areas after gifts are opened. These items can pose suffocation and choking hazards to a small child, or can cause a fire if near a flame.