More reasons to get vaccinated (as if any more were needed)

By ACSH Staff — January 7, 2013

As we look back on 2012, we are reminded once again of the importance of getting vaccinated, be it against the flu, whooping cough or a multitude of other illnesses which can be prevented. According to preliminary government figures [1], 2012 was the worst year for pertussis (whooping cough) in six decades, with over 40,000 cases reported. According to Dr. Tom Clark of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, there is the possibility of reaching even higher numbers in the coming years.

Although the number of whooping cough cases had remained constant at about 5,000 per year before the 1990s, numbers have been climbing since then. And this may be attributed to the fact that the vaccine used since the 90s does not seem to provide as long-lasting protection as the old one. For this reason, health officials have recommended that certain groups especially pregnant women get another booster shot to strengthen the vaccine originally administered to children. They are contemplating such recommendations for teens and adults as well.

And yet another illness you should get protection from as soon as possible: the flu. Experts are [2] already calling the winter of 2012-13 one of the worst for the flu in a decade. According to Dr. Dhirendra Kumar from Doctors Express Urgent Care in Seattle, We are not at the peak yet. I am anticipating there will be a lot of cases and we should prepare right now. This concern has been echoed by CDC Director Dr. Thomas Frieden: It seems to be starting earlier than most flu seasons and the strain of flu that's spreading tends to be associated with earlier and more severe flu years. Just another reason you may want to think about stopping by your doctor or your local pharmacy, if you have not already done so, to get your yearly flu vaccination. Many such sites also have other vaccines available, including the TDaP against pertussis, diphtheria and tetanus.