

Every year, the last week of April marks an important opportunity to remind the entire world about the importance of vaccines and immunization.

This year, the theme of World Immunization Week is “Are you up-to-date?” This is not just a question for the public but also a call to action: to find out more about the available vaccines and their benefits, to check whether you and your family have had all the vaccines you need and to protect yourself and your family by getting vaccinated. We summarize this call to action in the slogan: “Know. Check. Protect”.

Health is a precious gift, and vaccination is one of the best measures to protect it. Vaccines are not only for infants and children; they are for people of all ages to provide them with lifelong protection. More than an individual choice, vaccination is a shared responsibility. This year for World Immunization Week, we encourage everyone to make sure that they and their family are up-to-date with the vaccines they need. As mothers, fathers, family members and friends, we all need to make sure that our loved ones are protected against vaccine-preventable diseases whenever and wherever they need this protection. Vaccines are effective, reliable and they are offered free to the public through the Expanded Programme on Immunization.

This year marks the 40th anniversary of global commitment to the Expanded Programme on Immunization. Since the launch of this programme by the World Health Assembly in 1974, national immunization programmes have saved millions of lives and prevented millions of illnesses through vaccination. Celebrating the World Immunization Week this year is an opportunity for communicating the importance of immunization and vaccines, marking our gains in terms of healthy lives and renewing our commitment towards fighting vaccine-preventable diseases.

Let us all take action to Know, Check and Protect. Vaccinate your loved ones for a healthy future.

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