



# Herd Immunity: It's not just for cattle!

By Southeast Health Group

Ranchers have known for decades that when you vaccinate one animal, you make the whole herd healthier. When 95% of the herd has been vaccinated, you reach a state of “herd immunity” where illness is unlikely to occur at all, even in animals with weaker immune systems. Practicing immunization saves the lives

***“It works similarly in humans-- vaccination protects more than just the vaccinated person.”***

of the animals, reduces the veterinarian bills, and makes for a more profitable bottom line.

It works similarly in humans-- vaccination protects more than just the vaccinated person. Vaccines create immunity without making people sick, and are a safe and effective way to fill a community with disease-resistant people. Every vaccinated person adds to the effectiveness of community-

level protection. For example, after the chicken pox vaccine debuted in the United States in 1995, deaths rates from chicken pox dropped by as much as 97%, according to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC).

“It’s important to keep up with your children’s well-child exams,” said Jackie Brown, Chief of Physical Health Operations for Southeast Health Group. “Your primary care provider will help ensure that your child is up-to-date on their vaccine schedule, in addition to tracking other important development milestones and overall health.”

Why should you care about herd immunity? Because some people are unable to receive vaccines—and they could be members of your own family. Infants 6 months and younger are vulnerable to life-threatening infectious diseases. Pregnant women and



nursing mothers are among those who cannot be vaccinated against some common diseases. People who have had an organ transplant, take chemotherapy, or are allergic to vaccine components are also not allowed to be vaccinated. Simply put, when healthy people are up-to-date on their vaccines, they protect the ones they love.

**For more information about vaccines, or to schedule a primary care appointment, call Southeast Health Group at 800-511-5446.**

[www.southeasthealthgroup.org](http://www.southeasthealthgroup.org)