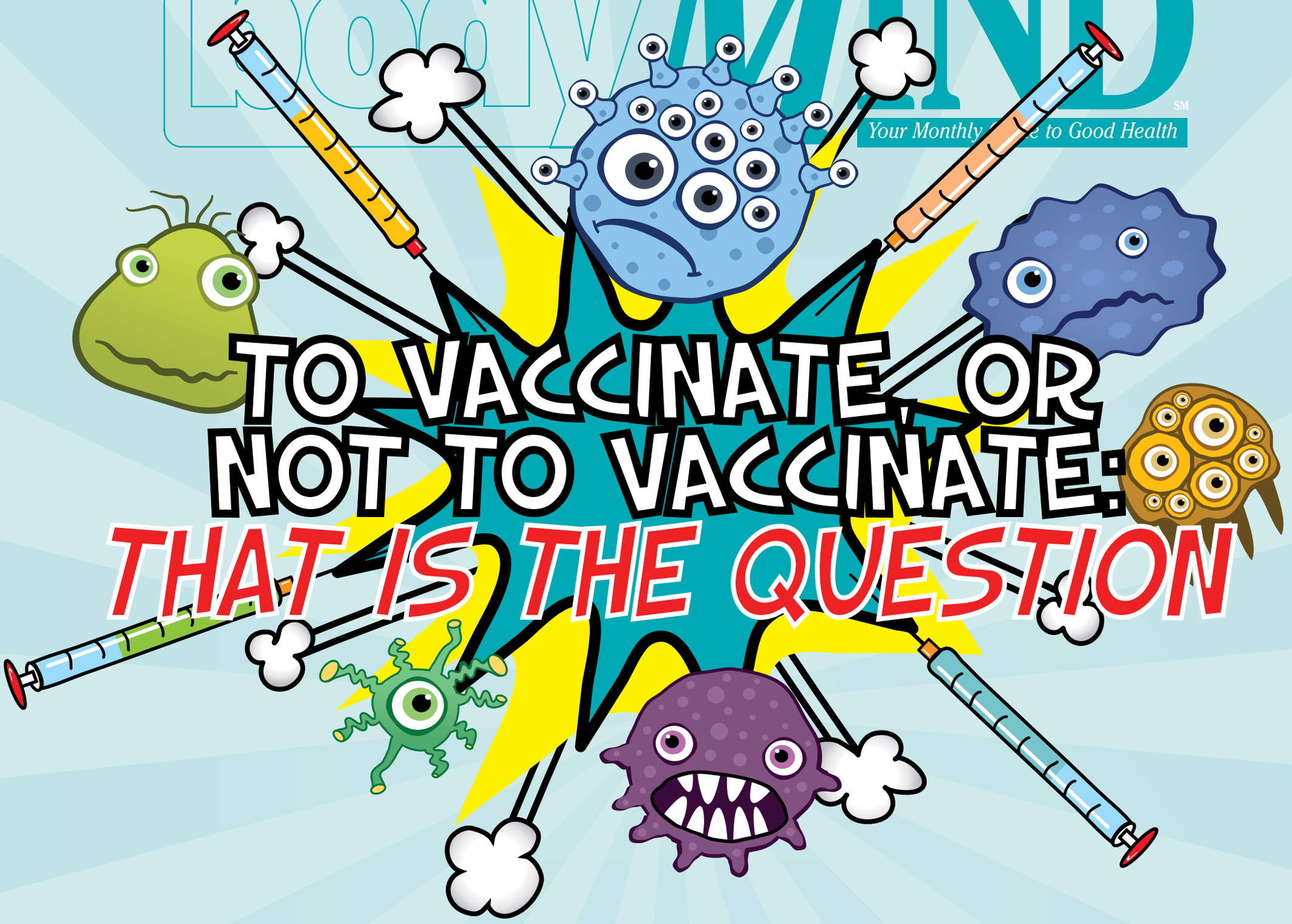

TO VACCINATE, OR NOT TO VACCINATE: THAT IS THE QUESTION

Influenza, a highly-contagious respiratory illness, generally affects between 5 and 20 percent of the U. S. population every year. An estimated 36,000 deaths occur as a result of flu-related causes, and approximately 200,000 individuals require hospitalization due to flu-related complications including pneumonia and dehydration.

VACCINATIONS

For many people, the best way to protect against the flu virus is to get flu vaccine. There are two vaccine options: a shot or nasal-spray. The shot is inactivated vaccine that is given with a needle, typically in the arm. The nasal-spray is composed of live flu viruses (that do not cause the flu) and is intended for healthy individuals between the ages of 2 and 49 who are not pregnant. Approximately 2 weeks after exposure to the flu virus, protective antibodies develop in the body. Because the viruses that cause influenza are constantly changing, it is important to be immunized against the most current strain of influenza every year.

WHO SHOULD GET VACCINATED?

While any person who wants to decrease his or her risk of contracting the flu virus should consider vaccination, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention report that the following groups are at high risk for flu complications or are in close contact with those at high risk and should be vaccinated each year.

- Children 6 months old up to their 19th birthday
- Pregnant women
- People 50 years of age and older
- People of any age with certain chronic medical conditions
- People who live in nursing homes and other long term care facilities
- Household contacts of persons at high risk for flu complications
- Household contacts and out of home caregivers of children less than 6 months of age
- Health care workers

WHO SHOULD NOT GET VACCINATED?

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the following groups should not receive a flu vaccine without consulting a physician.

- People who have a severe allergy to chicken eggs
- People who have had a severe reaction to an influenza vaccination in the past
- People who have developed Guillain-Barre syndrome within 6 weeks of getting an influenza vaccination previously
- Children less than 6 months of age
- People who have a moderate or severe illness with a fever should wait to be vaccinated until their symptoms lessen.

TO DETERMINE WHETHER OR NOT TO GET IMMUNIZED, CONSULT YOUR PHYSICIAN.

The *Health Information Center: Body/Mind*℠ and companion *Personal Health Guides*℠ are published by, and are the property of, Aegis, Nashville, TN. Copyright 2008 by Aegis. All rights reserved. The editorial content is not intended as a substitute for the advice of a medical professional. ***Consult your physician about all health-related matters.*** Comments and suggestions regarding these publications may be directed to Aegis, 8 Cadillac Drive, Suite 450, Brentwood, TN, 37027.

Executive Offices: Henry Ross, President & Chief Executive Officer / Kory Penzien, Vice President, Information Technology / Lori Copeland, Vice President, Finance & Administration
Creative Services: Zografia, A Design Group—Lou Everhart, Creative Director / Katherine Williams, Editor / Jessica Smith, Production Manager/Designer

The Health Information Center products are now printed on 50% Recycled paper with 25% Post Consumer Fiber. Our papers are FSC certified. By choosing a product with the FSC label, we are supporting the growth of responsible forest management worldwide. Proudly printed in the USA.

Spirit girls' night out® Journey for Your Health
. . . Your Best Health Now

Thursday, October 15 • 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. • Mr. and Mrs. Theodore P. Desloge, Jr. Outpatient Center

Lighten up with your girlfriends with an evening of fun and friendship.

· Enjoy a buffet of delicious hors d'oeuvres and desserts
· Celebrate your commitment to feeling your best with Victoria Babu
· Visit Macy's Lancome mini-makeover booth
· Recharge your spirit with a mini-massage
· Learn the latest information in gender-specific medicine:
Breast health · Sleep health · Gastrointestinal · Pelvic Floor

Fee: $10. Space is limited so register early. Event sold out in 2008!
Call **314-542-4848** for more information or to register.

St. Luke's HOSPITAL
Our specialty is you.
232 S. Woods Mill Road
Chesterfield, MO 63017

2-0434