



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**April 20-27 is National Immunization Awareness Week**

***I Boost Immunity and London Drugs partner to increase immunization rates and prevent the spread of vaccine-preventable diseases locally and around the world***

**April 18, 2019 – Richmond, BC** – To reinforce the importance of getting vaccinated and to help increase immunization rates, London Drugs has partnered with I Boost Immunity (IBI) as part of National Immunization Awareness Week (NIAW), which runs April 20 -27, 2019. For every vaccination administered this week at any London Drugs pharmacies in BC, a second lifesaving vaccine will be donated to UNICEF Canada through I Boost Immunity to immunize a child in another country.

“By getting vaccinated at London Drugs, British Columbians can play an active role in helping to protect tens of thousands of the world’s most vulnerable children from vaccine-preventable diseases,” says Shannon Turner, Executive Director of the Public Health Association of BC. “Our goal is to increase awareness about the importance of getting vaccinated and to improve immunization rates both here in Canada and across the globe.”

The numbers are impressive and show the positive impact of vaccines. About 100 years ago, infectious diseases were the leading cause of death worldwide. Today, in Canada, those diseases now cause less than 5 per cent of all deaths, thanks largely to immunization programs in all provinces and territories.

With that said, vaccine-preventable diseases such as measles have been making a resurgence in recent months and London Drugs pharmacists are hoping to reinforce the importance and success of immunizations during National Immunization Awareness Week, which also coincides with Vaccination Week in the Americas and World Immunization Week.

“It’s important to make sure your immunizations are up to date to help prevent the spread of illness to high risk individuals such as newborns, adults with chronic medical conditions, or anyone with compromised immunity,” says Gianni Del Negro, a Pharmacist at London Drugs.

Parents of young children know that the best way to protect their kids is to have them vaccinated on schedule but it is important for adults to review their vaccination history to see if any immunizations are required.

“Even if you received vaccines as a child, the protection provided by some vaccines can wear off over time and may need to be updated. As you age, you may also be at more risk for other diseases due to your health conditions and travel habits, so additional vaccines may be required,” says Del Negro.

Getting immunizations has never been easier and more cost-effective in Canada, due in large part to the growing role of pharmacists, who now administer many vaccines. The success of

pharmacists providing flu shots has led to provinces and territories allowing pharmacists to administer vaccines for pneumonia, shingles, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, measles, mumps, and rubella. Common travel vaccinations are also available at some pharmacies to prevent common illnesses like hepatitis A and B, yellow fever, typhoid, and traveler's diarrhea.

A recent survey conducted by InsightsWest on behalf of London Drugs study shows that Canadians trust their local pharmacists to administer immunizations, with 77 per cent of those surveyed agreeing that pharmacists are the most accessible health care professionals. Further, almost 60 per cent agree that seeing a pharmacist saves time and is more convenient than seeing another health care professional.

Patients can call the London Drugs pharmacy nearest them to book an appointment to have a vaccination administered. Appointments for Travel Immunization Clinics can also be [booked online](#). For every vaccine administered at any London Drugs location in BC between April 20-27, a second vaccine will be donated to immunize a child in another country.

“Simply by getting vaccinated, you can make a global impact, providing life-saving vaccinations to children worldwide. At the same time, you are taking care of your own health needs and potentially saving the lives of people in your community as well,” adds Shannon Turner, Executive Director of the Public Health Association of BC.

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## **ABOUT LONDON DRUGS**

Founded in 1945, B.C.-based London Drugs has 81 stores in more than 35 major markets throughout British Columbia, Alberta, Saskatchewan and Manitoba including its online store [www.LondonDrugs.com](http://www.LondonDrugs.com). London Drugs offers consumers a range of products from digital cameras and cosmetics to computers and televisions. Renowned for its creative approach to retailing, the company employs more than 7,500 people with pharmacy and health care services being the heart of its business. Committed to innovation and superior customer service, London Drugs has established itself as a reputable and caring company and continues to position itself for future growth and development. Please follow us! [@LondonDrugs](#)

## **ABOUT I BOOST IMMUNITY**

I Boost Immunity (IBI) is a digital learning platform administered by the Public Health Association of BC-designed to match local learning with global giving. The website uses online quizzes, articles and stories to raise local literacy about immunization, and pairs it with a global reward: childhood vaccines through UNICEF. For each quiz you pass on I Boost Immunity, the site will donate one vaccine to immunize a child in support of UNICEF Canada. For more information, visit [www.iboostimmunity.com](http://www.iboostimmunity.com).

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