

## **What is Herd Immunity**

Vaccines produce a high level of immunity to a particular medical condition among those individuals that receive the vaccine for that medical condition. In addition, individuals that have no immunity to the medical condition in question, but are surrounded by others that do, are also protected somewhat due to what is known of as "herd immunity." Herd immunity is the concept that the more individuals within a community that are immune to a particular infectious disease (either because of a prior infection or because of immunization), the less likely it is that the disease will spread within the community once any given individual within that community contracts the disease. Even individuals within the community that have no immunity such as newborns, those with suppressed immune systems, and those who have never been vaccinated, are offered some degree of protection if the others are vaccinated because the disease has less opportunity to spread if most are immune to it. It is felt that 90 to 95 percent of the individuals within the community must be immune to a particular disease in order for the concept of herd immunity to work. The farther the incidence of immunity to a particular medical condition drops, the more likely a disease is to spread. This is exactly what is happening within our country now due to the rising number of parents who are refusing to vaccinate their children. This trend must be stopped or we will witness an even greater resurgence of deadly diseases that were once brought under control by the widespread use of vaccines. Please vaccinate your children. Their health and the health of those around them depend on your decision.