Good people, nice idea, and great advocacy. That's how I would describe doctors-couple Denton Chua and Anne Marie Lagman-Chua, also known as the Immunizers. I met the young Dr. Denton through his father, the well-known St. Luke's Medical Center cardiologist and painter Dr. William Chua. The elder Chua introduced me to Denton whom he described as teeming with ideas and ideals on how to help the country.

As early as 2003, Dr. Denton was aware of the outbreaks of SARS, bird flu, and meningococcemia. "How do we solve such a problem?" he thought. Enter the concept of the Immunizers, a medical team solely committed to perfecting everything about vaccination.

According to Dr. Denton, "A vaccine contains the weakened or dead microbes of a particular disease. This is then injected to an individual to stimulate his immune system to produce antibodies against the disease. Thus, when the real disease attacks, your body can now fight off the infection."

Here are the top four diseases you can protect yourself from with vaccination:

- **Influenza** — more commonly known as flu or trangkaso — is a viral disease that afflicts a person typically three times in a year. Symptoms are fever, body weakness, and muscle aches. Yearly, influenza vaccination is recommended by health organizations to protect high-risk individuals. Who should get vaccinated? 1) Those 50 years old and above; 2) those younger than 50 but with medical conditions like high blood pressure, diabetes, and emphysema; and 3) nurses, doctors, caregivers, and health professionals. In the Philippines, the best time to get the vaccine is between February and June so you can be protected when the rainy or flu season comes.

- **Pneumonia** is a serious infection of the lungs and a common cause of death for the elderly. Patients with high blood pressure, diabetes, and asthma are prone to develop pneumonia. As usual, health professionals and caretakers of the young and old will benefit from getting a pneumonia vaccination, once every five years.

- **Hepatitis B** virus can be passed on to others through bodily fluids (through blood, sex), from mother to child, and the use of intravenous drugs. In the Philippines, 11 percent of the adult population are positive for hepatitis B. To find out if you need a hepatitis B vaccine, you can check your hepatitis profile blood test. Your doctor will know if you need to get vaccinated. The hepatitis B shots are given three times, within a period of six months.
**Tetanus** is a deadly disease that paralyzes the muscles, and can lead to lockjaw and death. You can get infected if you have an open wound that gets contaminated with the tetanus bacteria. If you don't have any previous tetanus shots, you need to get vaccinated three times within a 12-month period. If you have had previous tetanus shots, you should get a booster shot every 10 years. As a first-aid measure, clean wounds immediately with running water or alcohol.

**Pioneering efforts in vaccination**

Just how far have Drs. Denton and Anne Marie gone on this Immunizers concept? Well, the Immunizers have vaccinated over 5,000 patients and administered over 11,000 doses of vaccines in the past three years. They have a well-equipped Immunizers clinic in Greenhills, San Juan, which focuses solely on vaccinations.

Drs. Denton and Anne Marie were awarded Best in Vaccination Services by the National Shoppers’ Choice Awards in 2005 and second place, Best in Immunization Practices by the Philippine Foundation for Vaccination in 2006.

The entire medical team of Immunizers underwent training on vaccination recommendations and cold-chain management to ensure proper storage and administration of top-quality vaccines for each patient. Moreover, their patients have their own customized computer records.

According to Dr. Denton, while modern vaccines are extremely effective, they are not 100-percent perfect. For example, most vaccines are 90-percent effective, which means that nine in every ten people are protected from the disease. Side effects from vaccines are rare.

**Choosing the right vaccines for you**

If you're confused as to what kind of vaccines you need, don't worry because the Immunizers has in-house doctors to give you a free consultation. Actually, the Immunizers has come up with six vaccine packages: 1) parents and grandparents package, 2) travelers package, 3) pre-teens and teenagers package, 4) cancer prevention package, 5) planned motherhood package, and 6) animal lovers package.

When they were just starting out, Drs. Denton and Anne Marie confided to me that their dream is to “vaccinate the whole Philippines, especially the poor.” It’s a big dream that some people may scoff at. But I don’t think it’s an impossible dream anymore. Well, if you can dream it, then you can achieve it.

I can assure our readers that Drs. Denton and Anne Marie Chua are brilliant, idealistic, and compassionate doctors. See for yourself. For them, Immunizers is not just a business, it’s really about helping and educating our people. And I know that the successes they will reap in the future will be plowed back to helping our community.

You may call the Immunizers at (632) 744-5552 or 744-5553. Consultation is free. Check out www.immunizers.com.ph.

Ref.: http://www.philstar.com/health-and-family/432738/top-4-diseases-can-be-prevented-vaccination

Look more here: www.health.philippineculture.ph