How not to make a pig’s ear of swine flu immunisation

Polly Clinic

The swine flu pandemic may have some unforeseen consequences. Due to the major vaccination programme and also the possible burden of increased consultations on GP surgeries, health professionals in other branches of medicine have been approached to help.

It is an undeniable truth that patients always attend with more than one problem when they see their GP. To meet patient needs, here are some helpful hints and tips for specialist family planning health professionals, using their skill and experience in their field, while at the same time focusing on the green agenda of reduce, reuse and recycle.

Paronychia may be easily treated using the needle of the Depo-Provera® syringe. The syringe can then be recycled for ear syringing.

Physiotherapy referrals can be avoided by prescribing diaphragms – the spring makes an excellent hand exercise device, and chasing a diaphragm around the room when it springs out of the hand gives useful exercise for the whole body. If it should also be needed for its original purpose, the position for insertion gives added benefits for flexibility of the hips. Out-of-date contraceptive pill packets can be recycled by advising patients with finger stiffness to pop out the pills one at a time, then when they jump out and fall on the floor under the chest of drawers, kneel down, bend almost prone and pick them up using the thumb and each other finger in turn.

Finger injuries and sprains can be splinted with packets can be recycled by advising patients with finger injuries and sprains to use the thumb and each other finger in turn.

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If you have any old caps or diaphragms in your room, these can be reused as nipple shields to prevent jogger’s nipple, or as breast shields after delivery for those pregnant patients who will be breastfeeding later.

The contraceptive sponge has a new lease of life for patients with hyperhidrosis, and provides extra protection for urinary incontinence when used together with a diaphragm.

Femidoms – we cannot think of any uses for these.

Answers on a postcard please.

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