Next-Generation Pneumococcal Vaccine

In late April, the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved the next-generation pneumococcal vaccine (Pfizer’s Prevenar 20) for use in children aged six weeks to 17 years. This is an updated product from Pfizer’s Prevnar 13 vaccine that targets more serotypes of the streptococcus pneumoniae bacteria that causes infection. Read more about the approval. Keep an eye out for additional updates following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) meeting June 21–22, 2023.
COVID-19 Vaccine Updates

In April and May 2023, updates to the COVID-19 vaccination schedules were made. The changes simplified the schedules for some age groups and less COVID-19 products are being used, as monovalent mRNA vaccines are no longer authorized for use. You can visit the [CDC for the most up-to-date clinical guidance](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/index.html) and view the COCA call [Updated Recommendations for COVID-19 Vaccine Use](https://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/72/wr/mm7214e1.htm) held May 11, 2023.

Additionally, ICAAP partnered with CDPH & IDPH on April 25th to host a webinar on COVID-19 vaccine updates (note this was held prior to the May 2023 changes). View the [recording here](#) and the [slides here](#).

For scheduling/dosing charts and additional resources, visit the [I-VAC website](https://www.ivac.info).

FDA Approves First Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine

On May 3rd the FDA approved Arexvy, the first respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine approved for use in the United States. Arexvy is approved for the prevention of lower respiratory tract disease caused by RSV in individuals 60 years of age and older. [Read more.](https://www.fda.gov/news-events/press-announcements/fda-approves-first-respiratory-syncytial-virus-rsv-vaccine-care)
Pfizer also developed a protein-based RSV vaccine for people 60+, which is expected to be approved soon. An FDA advisory panel will meet on May 18th to consider the safety and effectiveness of Pfizer’s RSV vaccine for pregnant people. [See meeting announcement.](#)

These are exciting times for vaccine development.

End of the Public Health Emergency (PHE)

On May 11, 2023, the U.S. ended the Public Health Emergency (PHE) for the COVID-19 pandemic. The end of the PHE doesn’t mean COVID-19 is over, but there are some changes – including to how COVID-19 data is being reported. See [Illinois-specific information](https://www.idph.gov/). IDPH Director Dr. Sameer Vohra joined Governor Pritzker and other elected officials and healthcare leaders recognize the end of the PHE and declare May 11 as “Illinois Public Health and Health Care Hero Day.” See the [tribute video](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=) from Governor Pritzker.

Getting paid for bivalent COVID-19 vaccine administration:

Based on the updated CDC guidelines, six new immunization administration CPT codes have been created. The Illinois Medicaid COVID-19 Fee Schedule was updated May 12 and can be viewed [here](#). More information on CPT codes from the AAP is [here](#).

COVID-19 vaccine ordering:

IL providers are still able to place orders for both Pfizer and Moderna bivalent vaccines from the existing U.S. stockpile at no cost. This is anticipated to last through summer.
In response to growing global vaccine hesitancy, the AAP has launched a new vaccine hesitancy curriculum in Japan and the Philippines. The training covers evidence-based strategies like motivational interviewing and providing a presumptive vaccination recommendation. The simulation mirrors a real patient and allows pediatric clinicians to role-play while they practice their vaccine communication skills. The curriculum provides feedback, opportunities for ongoing learning, and follow-up support.

Read more about the vaccine hesitancy simulation training.

Commercialization of COVID-19 vaccines (which is the transition from direct government purchase of these vaccines to purchases by public and private payers) is expected in the fall of this year. Some questions remain about the details of this change. However, the US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) has announced a program that will help maintain access to COVID-19 vaccines and treatments for the uninsured. Through this program, government-purchased COVID-19 vaccines will be distributed to local health departments and HRSA-supported health centers. Additionally, partnerships with pharmacy chains will allow COVID-19 vaccines and treatments to be given at no cost to the uninsured. Stay tuned for more as things continue to unfold.

A recently published study reviewed the outcomes of over two million deliveries from April 2020–December 2020 to study the effects of COVID-19 infection on adverse pregnancy outcomes. The study showed that pregnant people with COVID-19 were at much higher risk of issues like respiratory distress, cardiac arrest, shock, and sepsis compared to those without infection. Additionally, the mortality risk for pregnant people with a COVID-19 infection at the time of delivery was 14 times greater than pregnant people without a COVID-19 infection. Vaccination during pregnancy is proven to be safe for mom and baby and may help to reduce or prevent delivery complications associated with COVID-19 infection.

Check out Vaccinate Your Family’s 2023 State of the ImmUnion Report to learn more about where US immunization efforts stand.
COVID-19 Vaccinator Hero Award

ICAAP would like to recognize and celebrate the amazing pediatric teams across the state that have been doing incredible work around COVID-19 vaccine administration. This month, please join us in congratulating the staff at Kidz Health for giving over 1,000 doses since June 2021!

Thank you for all you do!

5 Tools for Vaccine Administration

With vaccine administration updates regularly occurring, clinical staff should stay up-to-date on how to safely and effectively deliver vaccines to patients.

Here are some tools from Immunize.org that can be utilized in clinics:

1. The Skills Checklist for Vaccine Administration helps ensure best practices are being applied among nursing and clinically trained staff.

2. How to Administer Vaccines: If you are unsure of the dosage that should be administered, the proper needle angle, or the correct needle length to use, the following two resources can aid with that:
   
   • Administering Vaccines: Dose, Route, Site, and Needle Size
   
   • Administering Vaccines for Adults: Dose, Route, Site, and Needle Size

3. How to Administer Intramuscular and Subcutaneous Vaccine Injections: These resources detail how to safely and properly administer vaccines to both children and adults, grouping vaccines by the type of injection – intramuscular or subcutaneous.

4. FAQ – Administering Vaccines is a webpage dedicated to answering general issues that come with vaccine administration.

5. Preventing Errors in Vaccine Administration is a resource for every type of vaccine administration error that could happen, including tips to avoid making the error and what to do if the error has been made. Vaccine errors can be reported at Institute for Safe Medication Practices (ISMP) and the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS).

Upcoming Events

Tuesday, May 16th, 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.

Preparing for Summer Vacations – Travel Vaccinations (ICAAP Immunization Webinar Series 2023)

Register here

Monday, May 22nd, 12 p.m. – 1 p.m.

CCDPH & AHC Hepatitis B Webinar Series: Reducing the Risk of Hepatitis B – Perinatal Hepatitis B Webinar

Register here