Measles in Illinois

As of May 13, 2024, over 60 cases of measles have been reported in Illinois. The majority have been in Chicago, with a handful in suburban counties. There is community spread of measles. In response to this, CDPH has recommended an "accelerated" 2nd MMR dose for Chicago children (28 days after the first dose). IDPH has not issued state-wide guidance for accelerated doses. However, SIREN notices have noted that during an outbreak, an early second dose may be appropriate. This is in line with National AAP and CDC guidance when an outbreak is occurring. This accelerated timeline is acceptable for school entry in Illinois. More information is available through the webinar we hosted with CDPH and IDPH on April 25, 2024. Here is the recording.

Measles Testing and Reporting Reminders

- Illinois 77 Ill. Administrative Code, Part 690 Control of Notifiable Diseases and Conditions Code was amended effective February 27, 2024. Measles is now a Class 1a disease reportable immediately with the Section renamed to “Measles, Suspect, Probable or Confirmed (Reportable by telephone immediately, within three hours, upon initial clinical suspicion or laboratory test)” to reinforce the urgent need for reporting the disease upon clinical suspicion. Read more from the May 13, 2024 SIREN here.

- Notify CDPH or IDPH immediately upon suspicion of measles:
  - CDPH: Complete the online RedCap form. DO NOT call 311 or 312-743-7216 to report.
  - IDPH: Immediately report to local health department or IDPH.

- It is required in the Illinois Communicable Disease Code that specimens are submitted to IDPH Laboratories.

- Testing through commercial labs can delay the public health response to measles and it is recommended that measles testing be conducted at the state lab

- Refer to this job aid for more information about specimen collection and shipment.
Empathy to Address Vaccine Hesitancy

A new study reported in JAMA medical news shows that empathy may be a key tool in helping clinicians overcome patient vaccine hesitancy. The study showed that patients responded better to providers who not only addressed the patients' specific concerns but also conveyed an understanding of their initial viewpoints. Researchers in this study created a special technique called the Empathetic Refutational Interview (ERI), which helps providers guide their conversations through 4 steps:

- Elicit concern: Ask patients to share their thoughts.
- Affirm: Acknowledge the partial truths without validating misinformation.
- Offer a tailored refutation: After rapport is established, explain why a misconception is wrong and replace it with facts.
- Provide factual information.

Vaccination Timeliness Among US Children

An analysis done using close to 180,000 responses from the National Immunization Survey-Child spanning from 2011 to 2021 assessed changes in vaccination timeliness among US children aged 0 to 19 months and examined differences based on socioeconomic indicators. Over the study period, there was a notable increase in the proportion of children receiving the combined 7-vaccine series on time, rising from 22.5% in 2011 to 35.6% in 2021. However, the study also identified widening disparities in vaccination timeliness when examining socioeconomic status. Children from lower-income families and those without private health insurance experienced slower rates of improvement in on-time vaccination compared to their counterparts with higher income or private insurance.

These findings highlight persistent barriers to timely vaccination access among certain demographic groups, emphasizing the importance of targeted efforts to address disparities and ensure equitable vaccination rates among all children.

Spring Back to Vaccination

Use every appointment as an opportunity to promote vaccines by making a strong recommendation and answering questions around immunizations. Other vaccine promotion techniques include:

- Targeted outreach: Use your EHR and patient portals for reminder/recalls.
- Identify patients due for well-child visits by running an I-CARE “Immunization Due” report.
- Get staff buy-in: Run your clinic’s coverage rates in I-CARE and use team huddles to remind staff about the importance of getting children vaccinated on time or back on track.
- Share good vaccine information: Promote immunizations on social media, websites, etc.
- Make it convenient: Offer nurse-only quick shot visits. Consider drive-thru/pop-up vaccine clinics or weekend vaccine clinics.
Avian Flu Preparedness

The CDC is closely monitoring the situation regarding avian influenza A (H5N1), commonly known as bird flu, in the United States. They are conducting surveillance to track cases and assess the risk of spread. Through continuous risk assessment, the CDC is evaluating the potential impact of an avian influenza outbreak and developing plans to mitigate its spread. This involves identifying high-risk areas and populations, as well as implementing strategies for prevention and control (including data surveillance of the H5 vaccine). Use these talking points from the Public Health Collaborative to stay informed and help educate your patients.

Kids Don’t Need to Get Sick to be Healthy

This concept is fueled by the belief that kids used to be healthier than they are now. An article by Your Local Epidemiologist explains why this is not true. Infections used to be the top killer for children, especially those under the age of 5. In the 1900s, infectious disease was one of the top killers overall and this continued worldwide through the 1990s. This demonstrates both the dangers associated with infection and the undeniable efficacy of vaccines.

The "hygiene hypothesis", or the idea that overly clean environments are harmful and that kids need to be exposed to germs to strengthen their immune system, is also used as a basis for these claims. This is an outdated theory that only got part of the story right - it is important for kids to be exposed to “healthy” microbes, not those that cause disease. Ultimately, although infection can help build immunity, it is safer and more effective for kids to avoid disease and receive all recommended vaccines.

Sanofi Raises Private Stock Price of Nirsevimab

Sanofi has increased the cost for providers to carry its RSV (respiratory syncytial virus) immunization, nirsevimab. The new list price per dose for the 50 milligram (mg) and 100 mg doses is $519.75. Nirsevimab will remain free-of-cost for Vaccines for Children (VFC) providers to obtain for their eligible patients. This decision has raised concerns among healthcare providers and advocates, since cost already limited providers’ interest in stocking the product during the 2023 - 2024 season. Providers ordering private stock still have time to enroll in the nirsevimab reservation program, with the enrollment deadline extended to May 17.
Next Generation COVID-19 Vaccines

Your Local Epidemiologist (YLE) skillfully breaks down the groundbreaking research & development of a suite of next-generation COVID-19 vaccines to address the current limitations of the vaccine. These NextGen vaccines, currently in the clinical trial pipeline, aim to improve prevention of transmission and coverage against mutations, reduce side effects, and be compatible with other vaccines like the flu shot.

A promising category includes variant-proof vaccines designed to protect against a range of coronaviruses, with several candidates showing positive immune responses in early trials. Another category of NextGen vaccines is a focus on nasal vaccines targeting infection sites in the nose and throat, showing potential effectiveness in clinical trials.

Efforts also include combining COVID-19 and Flu vaccines, and developing self-amplifying mRNA vaccines to reduce side effects. Additionally, T cell-targeted vaccines are being explored to enhance immune response against different coronavirus components. Despite progress, rigorous evaluation is needed before these vaccines can be widely used.

COVID Vaccine Inventory

As the end of the 2023-2024 respiratory virus season is approaching, COVID-19 vaccine products are expiring and availability is changing. Due to reductions in shelf life, CDC recommends that providers order smaller quantities of vaccine (3-4 weeks of usage) and utilize more frequent orders if needed. For the Vaccines for Children (VFC) and Bridge Access Programs (BAP), the following availability is expected:

- Novavax: The latest expiry is 5/31/24. This vaccine is no longer available for ordering.
- Pfizer-BioNTech/Comirnaty:
  - 6 months - 4 years: The latest expiry is 7/31/24. This vaccine is no longer available for ordering.
  - 5 - 11 years: The latest expiry is 8/31/24. CDC will continue to process orders until supplies are depleted (expected 6/6/24).
  - 12 years and older: Latest expiry is 8/31/24. CDC will continue to process orders until supplies are depleted (expected late May/early June).
- Moderna/Spikevax:
  - 6 months - 11 years: Latest expiry is late September or better. CDC will continue to process orders until supplies are depleted (sufficient supply is expected for the rest of the season).

Breaking news: The Bridge Access Program will end in August 2024, 4 months earlier than expected. Stay tuned for more information and learn more here.
Dengue Vaccination Efforts in Puerto Rico

A [dengue vaccination campaign](#) is rolling out in Puerto Rico in response to an ongoing public health emergency related to the disease. The CDC and AAP Puerto Rico chapter are committed to administering Dengvaxia while it is still available for the next 2 years. The safe and effective Dengue vaccine is being discontinued at that time due to low global demand.

Dengue fever, a mosquito-borne illness, poses a significant threat in regions like Puerto Rico, where outbreaks have been frequent; due in part to climate change. The vaccination effort aims to mitigate the impact of dengue outbreaks by immunizing individuals at risk. However, the rollout faces challenges similar to those encountered during COVID-19 vaccination campaigns, including vaccine hesitancy, logistical issues, and the need for effective communication strategies. These efforts and challenges underscore the importance of community engagement, healthcare provider education, and robust surveillance systems in ensuring the success of the dengue vaccination program and addressing the broader public health emergency posed by the disease.

Combo Flu/COVID Test

Last month, the FDA granted [emergency use authorization (EUA)](#) for CorDx, an At Home Multiplex Rapid Test which detects and distinguishes between influenza A, influenza B, and COVID-19 in individuals with respiratory symptoms. It’s designed for people aged 14 years and older using self-collected nasal swabs, and for children aged 2 years and older with swabs collected by adults. This at home rapid test was validated through the NIP Independent Test Assessment Program.

GSK RSV Vaccine for Older Adults

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has submitted an application for regulatory approval of its RSV vaccine for adults aged 50-59. RSV is typically associated with infants and young children, but it can also cause serious illness in older adults. GSK’s move marks a significant step towards expanding the age range for RSV vaccination, potentially offering protection to a broader segment of the population.
Upcoming Events

- Adolescent Health Mini Conference: Friday, May 17 at 8AM
- Lead Poisoning Prevention Webinar: Tuesday June 4 at 12PM
- Essential Immunizations: Ensuring a Healthy Return to School for Migrant and Refugee Families: Tuesday, June 18th at 12PM
- ICAAP and IDPH Vaccine Summits for VFC providers outside of Chicago: May – October 2024

Quick Reminders & Resources

- From AIM: Managing Vaccine Hesitancy During an Outbreak: A Focus on Cultural Competency
- Explore vaccine coverage data with interactive tools from the AAP & State Health Compare
- Share this with your patients! AAP Parent Video Series on Vaccines
- The 2024 edition of Red Book is now available!
- Season 1 of the Labor of Love podcast from the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists shares stories of vaccines, variants, and parenting during COVID
- Check out Vaccinate Your Family’s 2 annual reports for important vaccine updates from the past year and suggestions for the upcoming year:
  - Vaccinate Your Family 2023 Annual Report
  - State of the ImMUner Union Report