



Immunization Newsletter October 2025

ICAAP's New Outreach Resource Page

Visit ICAAP's updated [Vaccine Outreach Social Media Toolkits and Education](#) webpage. On this page, you will find all the ready-to-use immunization social media toolkits, patient handouts, and posters that you know and love! Social media toolkits include detailed posting guides and downloadable graphics so you can simply copy, paste, and post, saving time while extending your impact. Provide families with reliable information they can view online, take home, or read while visiting your clinic. In today's environment, rumors and debunked information about vaccines circulate fast. As pediatricians and immunization champions, you play a critical role in amplifying science-based, evidence-driven messaging that families can trust.



The Washington Post

New poll:
85% of parents say
they trust their
child's pediatrician
on vaccines.

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN

**Images from the AAP's
Facebook page on October
7, 2025. Read more about
the poll [here](#).**

The Washington Post

Pediatricians serve as a
trusted partner to provide
accurate information on
vaccines to parents. A
family's confidence in
their pediatrician is a
**strong predictor of
vaccination.**

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN

Protecting Access to Immunizations in Illinois

September ACIP Meeting

The September 2025 ACIP meeting was riddled with multiple falsehoods and unclear evidence in the presentations and discussions held. Committee members voted to remove the combination vaccine MMRV as an option for the first dose of MMR or varicella vaccine. They also voted to recommend COVID-19 vaccines for all ages under shared clinical decision-making and to change the COVID-19 Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) to include more about six “risks or uncertainties related to COVID-19 vaccine” that were presented at the meeting. No specific language changes were suggested, and to date, no edits have been made. In October, the acting CDC Director signed off on the changes. Read a full summary of the meeting and votes [here](#).

Illinois Sets Respiratory Virus Guidelines

On September 12, 2025, Governor Pritzker signed an [Executive Order to Protect Life-Saving Immunization Access for Illinoisans](#). This order established a Statewide Vaccine Access Initiative, led by the Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), to help ensure Illinoisans have access to vaccines and to issue science-based state vaccine recommendations. On September 22, 2025, the longstanding [Illinois Immunization Advisory Committee](#) (IL-IAC) met. This group of public health leaders, physicians, and other experts reviewed RSV, flu, and COVID-19 data and voted on recommendations for the respiratory virus season. Illinois is [one of many states](#) to convene its own advisory group and issue recommendations. The IL-IAC recommendations are largely in line with the [American Academy of Pediatrics’ vaccine recommendations](#). The IAC may continue to make recommendations should the ACIP reconsider additional vaccine guidelines.

“IDPH, in partnership with the Statewide Vaccine Access Initiative, remain committed to all of you – our healthcare providers, public health leaders, and residents in Illinois. We will continue to protect and promote scientific credibility and immunization access.”
-Dr. Sameer Vohra

Respiratory Virus Season Updates

2025-2026 Respiratory Virus Season Recommendations

On September 23, 2025, the IDPH adopted the IAC's recommendations and released [respiratory virus season immunization guidance](#). This guidance is not a mandate. That same day, Director Dr. Vohra issued a [standing order for 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccines](#) aligned with the AAP's COVID-19 vaccine recommendations and allowing for the administration of 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccines in pharmacies without a prescription.

VFC programs can now order COVID-19 vaccines through I-CARE. View this [SIREN Alert](#) from IDPH and this [HAN Alert](#) from CDPH for more details on the products available and ordering best practices. Per federal policy, VFC providers are required to maintain stock of all routine ACIP recommended vaccines for their VFC-eligible populations. However, due to the unique considerations surrounding COVID-19 vaccination, the federal VFC program allows providers to exclude COVID-19 vaccines from their inventory if they are aware of referral locations and prepared to refer eligible children accordingly.

It's Time to Start Administering RSV Products!

RSV monoclonal antibodies can be administered between October - March, so start offering them to eligible infants now! HFS released a [Provider Notice](#) informing clinicians that both the recommended RSV products for infants, Beyfortus (nirsevimab) and Enflonsia (clesrovimab), will be covered. As a reminder, Palivizumab (SYNAGIS) is no longer routinely recommended for use and will be discontinued as of December 31, 2025.



Resources from AAP



ICAAP Joins State Leaders

ICAAP was honored to attend Governor JB Pritzker's "Ask Your Doctor" event, which reinforced trust in vaccines and encouraged families to turn to their doctor for health information and guidance. Watch a recording of the event [here](#) and read the press release [here](#). ICAAP President Dr. Michelle Barnes and several ICAAP leaders and members attended. Through these events, ICAAP continues to amplify the pediatric voice, advocate for health equity, and support evidence-based care for Illinois families.

Billing, Coding, and Liability Guidance from AAP

The AAP has put together detailed [logistical guidance](#) and information on documenting shared clinical decision-making, prescribing COVID-19 vaccines off-label, and health insurance coverage. Their updated [COVID-19 Vaccines: Getting Paid](#) webpage includes the most up-to-date information on COVID-19 billing and CPT codes. Additionally, the AAP will be cohosting a webinar on October 21 titled Clearing the Air on Liability and Practice Considerations, register [here](#). If you have any questions on billing and coding, the AAP [Coding Payment Hotline](#) is a free resource for you.

AAP's proposed smart phrase to document shared clinical decision-making

The patient/caregiver and I engaged in shared clinical decision-making about the benefits and risks of the 2025-2026 COVID-19 vaccine. This discussion included an opportunity for them to ask questions. No contraindication for vaccination was identified, and the patient/caregiver and I collaboratively determined the patient would benefit from vaccination. A COVID-19 vaccine was ordered in the context of shared clinical decision-making and educational materials were provided.

More From IDPH

Annual Respiratory Testing and Reporting Guidance

The IDPH issued updated [guidance for respiratory virus testing and reporting](#). For the 2025-2026 respiratory season, only the following specimens should be sent to IDPH for testing:

1. Specimens that are approved by local health departments (LHDs) on a case-by-case basis, such as for outbreak management or virus identification in a congregate facility, post-mortem evaluation, and cases of suspected novel influenza viruses.
2. Influenza specimens from individuals in the ICU which have tested positive for influenza A, but the specimen has not been subtyped at the facility.
3. Influenza specimens that cannot be subtyped.

Clinicians should report the following to their LHD:

1. Suspected novel influenza - reportable immediately, within three hours.
2. Pediatric respiratory-associated death due to SARS-CoV-2, Influenza, or RSV - reportable as soon as possible, but within three days.
3. Intensive Care Unit (ICU) hospitalizations with SARS-CoV-2, Influenza, or RSV - reportable as soon as possible, but within three days.
4. Outbreaks of acute respiratory illness in a congregate setting (e.g., skilled nursing facilities, assisted living facilities).



Check out these seasonal Respiratory Virus Data Dashboards for [IDPH](#) and [CDPH](#), both updated every Friday.

Illinois' Vaccine-Preventable Cancers Report

IDPH released a [report on vaccine-preventable cancers in Illinois](#), focusing on the HPV and hepatitis B vaccines. HPV vaccination rates among adolescents ages 13-17 in Illinois are higher than the U.S. average. The 2022-2027 [Illinois Comprehensive Cancer](#) plan outlines goals to guide cancer prevention, screening, treatment, and survivorship activities, and three of the four HPV goals have already been met. For hepatitis B, school vaccination coverage levels have remained at 93.6% for the past three school years. The hepatitis B vaccine is required for entry in Illinois childcare centers and middle schools.

Data and More

Influenza-Associated Pediatric Deaths

The 2024–25 influenza season recorded the highest number of pediatric deaths (280) outside of the 2009–10 H1N1 pandemic. The median age at death was 7 years old, with 56% of cases involving children with at least one underlying medical condition. Only 11% of vaccine-eligible children were fully vaccinated, and just 40% received antiviral treatment. Read the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) [here](#).

Pediatric Influenza-Associated Encephalopathy and Acute Necrotizing Encephalopathy

A recent [MMWR](#) highlighted influenza-associated encephalopathy (IAE), a rare but severe neurological complication of influenza. During the high-severity 2024–25 influenza season, 109 pediatric cases of IAE were reported in the United States, with 55% of the affected children previously healthy. Among these, 37 cases were classified as acute necrotizing encephalopathy (ANE). Overall, 74% of IAE patients required ICU admission, and 19% of them died; the mortality rate for ANE patients was even higher, at 41%. Only 16% of vaccine-eligible children with IAE had received the 2024–25 influenza vaccine.

Measles Update

As of October 8, 2025, a total of [1,563 confirmed measles cases](#) and 42 outbreaks have been reported in the United States across 42 jurisdictions. Two measles cases were recently [reported in Cook County](#), marking a total of [12 measles cases](#) in Illinois since April 2025.

Moderna mNEXSPIKE Clinical Trials

Moderna [has shared early results](#) from a Phase 4 clinical trial of its 2025-2026 mNEXSPIKE® COVID-19 vaccine. Preliminary data indicate a significant increase in neutralizing antibodies, with participants aged 12-64 (including those with high-risk conditions) and individuals aged 65+ showing more than a 16-fold increase in antibody levels.



Additional Resources and Events

Resources

- The AAP updated their [RSV immunization administration visual guide](#).
- The Public Health Foundation (PLF) developed a free [online training course](#) to help health care providers create a culture of immunization in their practice.
- IDPH released a memorandum on [Interim Work Exclusion Guidance for Health Care Personnel with COVID-19, Influenza, and Other Acute Respiratory Viral Infections](#). Remember, vaccination of health care personnel remains critical to control COVID-19 and influenza transmission in health care settings.
- The Vaccine Integrity Project's [data visualization tool](#) allows users to explore immunization data and related analyses interactively. An [interactive infographic](#) to view medical society immunization recommendations in one place is also available.



Upcoming Webinar

- November 19, 12PM: ICAAP webinar - Managing and Preparing for Outbreaks



Register at illinoisaap.org/events or scan the QR code