



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
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Commissioner

*** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL PROVIDERS AND OFFICE STAFF ***

August 19, 2010

Dear Colleague:

The Bureau of Immunization (BOI) would like all health care providers to be aware of the new Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) 2010 recommendations for universal seasonal influenza vaccination. Additional influenza vaccine updates are provided below.

The ACIP has expanded the recommendation for annual influenza vaccination to include all people ages 6 months and older for the 2010 – 2011 influenza season. The new recommendation seeks to remove barriers to influenza immunization and signals the importance of preventing influenza across the entire population.

The initial distribution of influenza vaccine has begun. Vaccination efforts should begin as soon as you receive vaccine and continue through late spring. This year, seasonal and 2009 H1N1 influenza A virus strains will be combined into one trivalent seasonal vaccine, available in both inactivated and live attenuated forms.

Vaccinating Children 6 Months through 8 Years of Age

As per ACIP recommendations, children aged 6 months through 8 years of age should receive 2 doses of seasonal influenza vaccine, if they have not previously received at least 2 doses of seasonal vaccine in the past AND one or more doses of 2009 monovalent H1N1 vaccine. Please see the attached chart for further guidance.

ACIP has recommended that the seasonal influenza vaccine manufactured by CSL under the brand name Afluria[®] should not be administered to children ages 6 months to 8 years. These recommendations are the result of increased reports of febrile seizures associated with the use of other CSL seasonal influenza vaccine in Australia, and increased frequency of fever in children ages 5 years to 8 years in one U.S. trial. Children ages 5 to 8 years with medical conditions that put them at high risk for influenza complications, should only receive Afluria if no other age-appropriate, licensed seasonal influenza vaccine is available.

Vaccine Ordering

Influenza vaccine is now available through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program. This year, there are two ways to order. A new online ordering tool is now available through the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) Online Registry. To access the tool, please go to www.nyc.gov/health/cir and log on to the Online Registry. Go to the VFC icon on the CIR toolbar and tab on 'Order VFC Vaccine' to begin placing your order. To track your order, go to the VFC icon on the CIR toolbar and tab on 'Vaccine Order Tracking'. You may also fax your order of influenza vaccine using the **2010-2011 Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Order Form** (see attached). Send your fax orders to 212-676-2314. Regardless of your ordering method, please request **all** of the influenza vaccine you will need for the entire influenza season. To ensure every VFC provider requesting influenza vaccine receives a supply as soon as it is available, we will send partial orders until your entire order has been filled. You may e-mail nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov or call 212-676-2323 during business hours to verify your balance. We expect to have a sufficient supply of seasonal influenza vaccine this year. If you require more vaccine, place the order indicating that it is an "Additional Order" and it will be processed as soon as possible.

For adults and non-VFC eligible patients, ample influenza vaccine is still available for purchase for the 2010-11 season, if you have not previously pre-booked your order. Providers who have not yet ordered influenza vaccine should contact influenza vaccine manufacturers or those pharmaceutical vendors that distribute vaccine now, to ensure all your patients can be immunized during influenza season. For a list of vaccine manufacturers and distributors, please visit <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/flu/downloads/pdf/providers/flu-vac-ordering-form.pdf>.

Please note that New York State Public Health Law §2112, effective July 1, 2008, prohibits the administration of vaccines containing more than trace amounts of thimerosal to children less than 3 years of age and to women who know they are pregnant. Therefore, be sure to order a sufficient supply of preservative-free, single-dose preparations of influenza vaccine to ensure these patients are immunized. All single dose vaccine preparations may be used whereas all multi-dose vials contain thimerosal.

New Formulation Available for Older Adults

Fluzone[®] High-Dose influenza vaccine, manufactured by sanofi pasteur, is now available for adults ages 65 and older. This is a newly licensed trivalent inactivated vaccine containing 4 times the standard dose of influenza antigen, providing a more robust immune response in elderly patients compared to standard dose influenza vaccine.

Recommendations Regarding Unused Vials of 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine

Expired unopened and non-viable vials, pre-filled syringes, and nasal sprayers of the 2009 H1N1 monovalent influenza vaccine can be returned to the CDC via the Central 2009 H1N1 Influenza Vaccine Recovery Program. Detailed information on how to return H1N1 influenza vaccine can be found at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/imm/immpinf.html>.

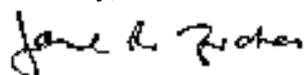
Further, sanofi pasteur monovalent 2009 (H1N1) influenza vaccine in multi-dose vials will have a shorter expiration period than indicated on the label and should be used by September 15, 2010, regardless of the expiration date imprinted on the package (see attached). This is to ensure that the vaccine is used while it remains within its potency specification. There are no safety concerns with these lots of 2009 H1N1 vaccine and you do not to take any action with regard to your patients who received this vaccine. You may continue to administer this vaccine through September 15, if you have not received your seasonal influenza vaccine supply. Once you do, the trivalent seasonal vaccine should be used instead. Please note that in September you will receive a letter and mailing label from the distributor so that you can return this expired vaccine.

Reporting Requirements

All providers administering doses of any vaccine to children less than 19 years of age in NYC must be report to the CIR. For more information, please visit www.nyc.gov/health/cir. Vaccines administered to adults age 19 years and older may be reported to CIR with documented informed consent. We strongly encourage adult providers to obtain consent from patients and report all administered doses. A sample consent form for individuals 19 years of age and older can be found at http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/cir/consent103mr_1.pdf.

We encourage you to make every effort to vaccinate your patients this year. For further information about influenza, please visit www.nyc.gov/flu and go to <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr5908.pdf> for the 2010 ACIP Recommendations for the Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines.

Sincerely,



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Bureau of Immunization