



August Immunization Newsletter

STATEMENT OF POLICY: VACCINES AND NONMEDICAL EXEMPTIONS

Due to the rise in state exemptions for vaccines, ACOG has released a [statement of policy on vaccines and nonmedical exemptions](#). Vaccines are a proven, safe public health tool with the potential to prevent and eradicate many infectious diseases affecting children, adolescents, and adults, including diseases that cause serious adverse outcomes in pregnant women and their fetuses. Today's declining vaccination rates due to nonmedical exemptions threaten to reverse decades of progress in reducing and possibly eliminating vaccine-preventable diseases. ACOG opposes nonmedical exemptions from state immunization requirements and urges ob-gyns to educate and encourage patients to get immunized. It is also important to recognize that some medical exemptions may be for temporary reasons, and that those exemptions should be periodically reassessed.

PREPARING FOR FLU SEASON

It is important to start preparing your practice and yourself for the 2019–20 flu season. ACOG, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the CDC strongly recommend that all persons six months and older receive an annual flu shot, and that all women who are or will be pregnant during flu season receive an inactivated influenza vaccine. Vaccination before the start of circulation of influenza virus in your community is preferred, ideally before the end of October, given the variability in the onset of influenza seasons. Pregnant women are at increased risk of severe disease and hospitalization related to influenza.

The below resources will assist you in achieving proper storage, handling, and administration of vaccines as you prepare for flu season.

- The [Vaccine Storage and Handling Toolkit](#) serves as a comprehensive guide of best practices for vaccine storage and handling from Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations, product information from vaccine manufacturers, and scientific studies.
- [You Call the Shots: Vaccine Storage and Handling Module](#) is an interactive, web-based immunization training course comprised of a series of modules geared toward the discussion of vaccine-preventable diseases and up-to-date recommendations. Each module offers learning

opportunities, self-test practice questions, reference and resource materials, and an extensive glossary. Health care personnel may receive either continuing education or a certificate of completion.

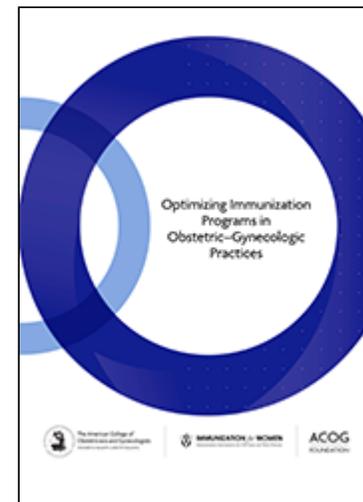
- The CDC's [vaccine administration](#) webpage contains comprehensive information on vaccine administration policies and procedures that all health care personnel should be trained on before administering vaccines. Topics covered include contraindications, patient education, preparing and administering the vaccine, and documentation. Additionally, the CDC's [Vaccine Administration e-Learn course](#) provides comprehensive training on these topics and more.
- The CDC and FDA conduct ongoing safety monitoring of vaccines licensed for use in the United States. Both also monitor flu vaccine safety during pregnancy during each influenza season using the [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#). Other mechanisms of monitoring influenza vaccine safety in pregnant women include using the [Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment](#) project and [Vaccine Safety Datalink](#).

OPTIMIZING IMMUNIZATION PROGRAMS IN OBSTETRIC–GYNECOLOGIC PRACTICES TOOL KIT

ACOG's [Optimizing Immunization Programs in Obstetric–Gynecologic Practices](#) resource can help you and your practice implement strategies to improve immunization processes, increase patient immunization rates, and effectively integrating immunizations into workflow and routine practice.

Within the [tool kit](#), you will find the following ACOG immunization resources for providers:

- **CO 772: Immunization Implementation Strategies for Obstetrician–Gynecologists**
- **Strategies for Effectively Integrating Immunizations into Routine Obstetric–Gynecologic Care tip sheet**
- **Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programs: Tips for Optimizing Practice Management tip sheet**
- **Developing an Immunization Referral System tip sheet**
- **2019 Immunization Coding for Obstetrician–Gynecologists quickreference coding card**



On June 26, 2019, the CDC’s Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) voted to recommend shared clinical decision making for persons aged 27 through 45 years when considering the 9-valent HPV vaccine. This recommendation is for women who have not previously received an HPV vaccine series, and who are at risk for acquisition of HPV. HPV vaccination is most effective when given during the recommended ages of 11–12 years.

Ob-gyns are encouraged to initiate conversations with women 27–45 years of age about the benefits of HPV vaccination. For these patients, their decision to be vaccinated should be individually based using shared decision making and clinical judgement with consideration of their circumstances, preferences, and concerns, including the possibility of acquiring new HPV infection.

Read ACOG’s [Practice Advisory: FDA Approval of 9-valent HPV Vaccine for Use in Women and Men Age 27–45](#) for additional information on the ACIP vote, as well as the recently published CDC MMWR [Human Papillomavirus Vaccination for Adults: Updated Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#). ACOG is reviewing its clinical guidance to determine if updates are needed based on the recommendations from the ACIP vote.

For information regarding HPV and HPV vaccine, visit the CDC’s [HPV for Clinicians](#) webpage.

NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH

It is not too late to take part in recognizing August as National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM)! This annual observance highlights the importance of on-time vaccination for people of all ages. This is an opportune time to ensure your patients are up to date on recommended vaccines. Research has consistently shown that health care professionals are the most trusted source of vaccine information for patients.

To assist you in recognizing NIAM and educating your patients about the benefits of vaccination, the CDC and the Public Health Foundation have developed a [digital communication tool kit](#) with key messages, sample social media, graphics, and educational resources to share on your practice website, social media pages, and directly with patients. Throughout NIAM and beyond, you can also engage with the CDC and other health care professionals on social media by using #ivax2protect in your posts.

Additionally, use NIAM as an opportunity to access the [CDC’s educational resources](#) like the [#HowIRecommend](#) video series, which offers simple and practical guidance for engaging in successful vaccine conversations with parents and patients.



ACOG'S IMMUNIZATION APPLLET



Download the [ACOG app](#) and access authoritative information from the leading experts in women's health care. The immunization applet is part of the ACOG app and is a trusted and interactive resource on immunization best practices. The app includes an interactive feature that generates recommended immunizations based on the information providers enter about their patient's age and medical conditions. The app includes the 2019 CDC Adult Immunization Schedule.

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