November Immunization Newsletter

Materials for the 2019–20 Influenza Season

The CDC released a two-page resource guide highlighting some of their influenza materials for health care providers for the 2019–20 influenza season. The Materials for the 2019–20 Influenza Season resource guide includes links to information about Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommendations; flu campaign materials; webinars; training modules; e-learns; vaccine information statements; and an influenza video addressing FAQs about influenza vaccination storage, handling, and administration recommendations and best practices for the 2019–20 influenza season.

Visit the CDC’s Influenza page for more available resources to use throughout this flu season.

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2018–19 U.S. Influenza Season Vaccination Coverage

In a recent CDC FluVaxView report on the 2018–19 influenza season, flu vaccination coverage among adults 18 years of age or older was 45.3%, an increase of 8.2% from the 2017–18 flu season. Vaccination coverage with one dose or more of flu vaccine was 62.6% among children age six months through 17 years, an increase of 4.7% from the 2017–18 flu season.

ACOG recommends that all adults receive an annual influenza vaccine and that women who are or will be pregnant during influenza season receive an inactivated influenza vaccine. An offer of a vaccine from a health care provider plays an important role in increasing flu vaccination coverage among patients, so ob-gyns and other healthcare professionals should recommend influenza vaccination to their patients. They should be prepared to counsel all pregnant women about the safety and benefits of influenza vaccination for themselves and their fetuses and advocate for the benefits of passive immunity from maternal immunization for newborns.

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National Influenza Vaccination Week

It is not too late to vaccinate your patients! This year’s National Influenza Vaccination Week will be observed from December 1 to 7. This national observance highlights the importance of continuing flu vaccination through the holiday season and beyond.

While the CDC recommends getting vaccinated by the end of October, flu vaccination into December and beyond can still be beneficial for people who have yet to receive their vaccine. As long as flu viruses circulate, influenza vaccination should continue to be offered to protect against flu.
New! National Foundation for Infectious Diseases Tool Kits

The National Foundation for Infectious Diseases has released two new tool kits: one to raise awareness of the burden of flu in adults with chronic health conditions, and one focused on the risks associated with measles.

The Flu and Chronic Health Conditions Tool Kit includes free and downloadable animated videos highlighting the importance of flu prevention, infographics for health care providers and patients, facts sheets for specific chronic health conditions, and other additional resources. The Measles Awareness Tool Kit includes animated videos, infographics, sample language for newsletters, and other resources stressing the importance of prevention through vaccination.

ACOG’s Influenza Resources

ACOG offers many tools and resources to help physicians promote flu vaccination and improve their practice’s immunization program, including

- Committee Opinion 753: Assessment and Treatment of Pregnant Women with Suspected or Confirmed Influenza
- Committee Opinion 732: Influenza Vaccination During Pregnancy
- Maternal immunization patient education tools (new)
- Influenza Immunization During Pregnancy tool kit
- Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programs: Tips for Optimizing Practice Management
- Optimizing Immunization Programs in Obstetric–Gynecologic Practices tool kit
Global Routine Vaccination Coverage, 2018

The CDC recently published a Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report addressing global routine vaccination coverage for 2018. Endorsed by the World Health Assembly in 2012, the Global Vaccine Action Plan 2011–20 calls on all countries to reach 90% or more national coverage with all vaccines in the country’s national immunization schedule by 2020. Among new and underused vaccines, global coverage increased from 2007 to 2018 for completed series of rotavirus vaccine, pneumococcal conjugate vaccine, rubella vaccine, Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine, and hepatitis B vaccine. According to the report, tailoring strategies for hard-to-reach populations and strengthening systems for administering vaccines beyond infancy are essential to ensure increases in vaccination coverage and disease reduction.