

Pediatric Vaccination During COVID-19

Health care providers should continue vaccinating during the COVID-19 pandemic, especially infants who are at high risk of getting vaccine-preventable diseases.

Slowing or stopping access to vaccinations increases our risk of other disease outbreaks.

Considerations for health care providers

As you assess your facility's capacity to continue providing vaccinations during COVID-19, consider these things:

- Risks to patients around possible exposure to COVID-19 when they come in for vaccinations and well child visits.
- Strategies in clinic operations to mitigate these risks.
- Local level of COVID-19 illnesses and how many sick patients come to your clinic.
- Impact of COVID-19 illnesses on clinic staff.

Providing vaccinations while protecting patients and staff

Consider these actions to help provide a safe environment for patients and staff when vaccinating:

- Limit well visits to early morning and use the rest of the day for sick visits.
- Dedicate specific clinics, buildings, or rooms for sick visits and for well visits.
- Conduct well-child visits for newborns, and for infants and younger children who require vaccinations, and reschedule well-child visits for older children for a later date.
- Lower the number of patients on-site at any one time. Think about closing a waiting room or registration area and have patients check in by phone from the parking lot.
- Consider different entrances in your clinic – one for sick and one for well patients.
- Clearly mark entrances for patients who are high risk for COVID-19.
- Tell patients who are sick to use telemedicine or a phone call.
- Determine which chronic conditions may be safely managed by a phone consult or telemedicine visit.
- Consider calling patients the day prior to well-child visits to screen for upper respiratory infection symptoms (i.e., fever, cough, shortness of breath). Reschedule appointments for families who are sick.

Because of personal, practice, or community circumstances related to COVID-19, some providers may not be able to provide well-child visits, including giving vaccinations, for all patients in their practice. **Health care providers are encouraged to prioritize newborn care and vaccination of infants and young children (through age 24 months) if a practice can provide only limited well-child visits.**

Reminders

- Consider that COVID-19 illnesses may impact staffing. Make sure that new staff are trained to properly prepare and administer vaccines.
- Continue to take every opportunity to vaccinate.

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To obtain this information in a different format, call: 651-201-5414.

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