



Immunization Update

The Iowa Immunization Program

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**Call the IRIS
Help Desk at
1-800-374-3958
for Enrollment Details or**

The Immunization Update is
available on the Web at:

www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/immunization.asp

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Iowa Expands VFC Hepatitis A Coverage

As of April 1, 2009, the Iowa VFC Program expanded Hepatitis A vaccine coverage of VFC eligible children to include children 1 through 18 years of age. Previously, the program had only provided Hepatitis A vaccine for children 12-23 months of age.

Recalling patients for mass Hepatitis A vaccination clinics is not necessary, however clinics should review patient immunization histories at future visits and provide Hepatitis A vaccine as indicated.

A chart that outlines what vaccines are covered by the Iowa VFC Program and at what ages is available on our Web page:

www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/immunization/vfc_vaccine_covered_age_ranges.pdf

For questions regarding Hepatitis A vaccine contact Terri Thornton at 800-831-6293, ext. 2 or Bridget Konz at ext. 7. For Hepatitis A vaccine ordering questions, contact Janean Iddings at ext. 5.

April Showers Bring...Vaccine S & H Incidents?

With spring storms on the horizon, the Immunization Program urges clinics to review their Vaccine Storage and Handling Plan and Vaccine Emergency Response Plan. A template for these documents are found on our Web page: http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/immunization/storage_handling_guide.pdf.

Review of the plans should include contacting their back-up storage facility to ensure they remain capable of properly storing vaccine should an emergency move be necessary, as well as review transport procedures.

Remember that Varicella containing products must be moved on dry ice, even if the distance is short.

Varicella containing vaccine (Varivax and Zostavax) that is moved on regular ice will not be viable and must not be administered.

Clinics are reminded that if temperatures in their storage units deviate from the normal ranges of 35°- 46°F in the refrigerator and less than 5°F in the freezer that **immediate action must be taken.**

The manufacturers must be contacted for instructions and the Immunization Program must be notified and informed of action taken to safeguard the vaccine supply.

For information on vaccine storage and handling, contact Terri Thornton at 800-831-6293, ext. 2.

Kindergarten Round Up Time!

As we enter spring, kindergarten round-ups and school physicals are in full swing. The Immunization Program would like to remind school nurses and providers of the changes to Iowa's Immunization law and that we have free education materials available to assist with informing parents about their role in immunizations and documentation for school.

For the 2009-2010 school year, children entering kindergarten are required to have additional doses of DTaP, Polio, and Varicella. The new requirements include the following doses: 5 DTaP, 4 Polio,

and 2 Varicella vaccinations. Children must also have 2 doses of MMR and 3 doses of Hepatitis B vaccine. Please be aware there are age and dose caveats to these requirements. The Immunization Program has consolidated the requirements for licensed child care and school entry into a easy-to-use one page document which is available at: http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/commmon/pdf/immunization/immunization_requirements.pdf

Additionally, we have free education resources available for schools and child care facilities to educate parents on Iowa's Immunization

Law. The brochure "Iowa Immunization Law and You" outlines the immunization certificate requirements and has an easy to interpret immunization requirement chart. This brochure is available in English and Spanish through the Health Protection Clearinghouse.

To order free brochures go to the Immunization Program Web page (<http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/immunization.asp>) and click on the green button labeled "Immunization Print Materials." For questions contact Bridget Konz at 800-831-6293, ext. 7.



Free Immunization Education Materials

Do you need free, quality immunization information for your clinic, hospital, school, or health department?

The Iowa Department of Public Health contracts with the Cedar Rapids Library and the Health Protection Clearinghouse to bring you "one-stop shopping" for your immunization education supplies.

The Immunization Program offers brochures, both English and Spanish, for on a variety of topics as well as Vaccine Information Statements and VFC program documents.

All of our information is offered free of charge. To preview items available from the Immunization Program go to our Web page <http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/immunization.asp>

and click on the green button titled "Immunization Print Materials." On this page you will be able to preview all the items we offer, print single copies if needed, and order large quantities of materials.

Some items do have quantity limits on them, however if you need more than the allowable amount, please contact Bridget Konz at 800-831-6293, ext.7.

Immunization Update 2009

Mark your calendars for the July 30, 2009, Live Satellite Broadcast and Web cast from CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases (NCIRD).

The event will take place from 9:00 AM – 11:30 AM and 12:00 – 2:30 PM EST. More information about this broadcast will soon be available at the <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/ed/default.htm>

National Infant Immunization Week
Love them. Protect them. Immunize them.



April 25-May 2, 2009

National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW) will be celebrated April 25-May 2, 2009, in conjunction with Vaccination Week in the Americas (VWA). The theme for NIIW is "Love them. Protect them. Immunize Them." Visit the NIIW Events Web page (<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw>) for planning and evaluation resources, public relations materials, and communication campaign materials. Add your local activity to the National Calendar of NIIW Events <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/events/niiw/2009/09activities.htm>.

HIB Shortage Continues...

The national vaccine supply continues to experience a shortage of *haemophilus influenzae B vaccine* (Hib) PedvaxHIB manufactured by Merck.

As a result, the IDPH Immunization Program continues to review and fill limited orders with ActHIB or Hib-containing Pentacel both manufactured by sanofi pasteur.

Recent cases of invasive Hib disease in the United States highlight the importance of giving the 2 or 3 dose primary Hib series (ActHIB = 3 dose primary series, PedvaxHIB = 2 dose primary series) to children.

Due to the on-going Hib shortage, providers should continue to defer the booster dose of Hib-containing vaccine at the 12-15 month visit. Additionally, it is critical to keep up-to-date documentation of children who are deferred so that recall reminders can be made once the shortage is over.

The Iowa Department of Public Health has extended the "Hib Waiver" that allows children to attend a licensed child care center without the booster dose of Hib from December 31, 2008, to September 30, 2009. It is anticipated the Hib shortage will be resolved prior to September. Copies of the Hib Waiver are available at:

http://www.idph.state.ia.us/adper/common/pdf/immunization/hib_waiver.pdf

If you have questions regarding vaccine availability contact Janean Iddings at 1-800-831-6293, ext. 5, or for vaccine questions please contact Terri Thornton or Bridget Konz at 1-800-831-6293, ext. 2 and 7 respectively.



Review of HIB Recommendations:

The following non-high risk children should be scheduled to receive the primary series of Hib vaccine as outlined below:

- If the child is at least 6 weeks but less than 12 months of age and has received zero, one, or two doses of Hib vaccine, schedule him/her for the first or next dose(s) immediately with a minimum of four weeks between the doses. These children will need one booster dose when the Hib vaccine shortage is over.
- If the child is between 12 and 14 months of age and has not had any doses of Hib vaccine, schedule appointments for two doses, eight weeks apart.
- If the child is between 12 and 14 months of age and has received Hib vaccine but did not complete the primary series before they turned 1-year-old (i.e., had 1 dose of the Merck product OR 1-2 doses of the sanofi product), schedule an appointment for 1 additional dose, a minimum of eight weeks from the last dose.
- If the child is at least 15 months of age but less than 5 years of age and has not received any doses of Hib vaccine OR has not completed the primary series (i.e., had 1 dose of the Merck product OR 1-2 doses of the sanofi product), schedule an appointment for one dose.
- If the child is 5 years old or older and hasn't received any Hib vaccine, Hib vaccine is not necessary.

Certain children are at increased risk for Hib disease, including children with asplenia, sickle cell disease, human immunodeficiency virus infection, and certain other immunodeficiency syndromes, and malignant neoplasms. CDC recommends that providers continue to vaccinate these children with available Hib conjugate vaccines according to the routinely recommended schedules, including the 12-through-15-month booster dose.

Providers who serve predominantly American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children living in AI/AN communities should continue to stock and use PRP-OMP-containing Hib vaccines (Merck product) and vaccinate according to the routinely recommended schedule, which includes the 2-dose primary series (ages 2 and 4 months) and a 12-through-15-month booster dose.

For more information contact the Iowa Immunization Program at 800-831-6293.

Need Information? Check Out a New Interactive Tool from CDC.

CDC has developed a Sortable Table of Standardized Vaccine Abbreviations. This tool will enable users to quickly sort by vaccine name, abbreviation, trade name, or manufacturer and can be found at

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/about/terms/USVaccines.html>



Iowa Public Health Modernization

Providers may have heard about Iowa's recent efforts to modernize its public health system. But what does this have to do with immunization services? A lot, according to Iowa Department of Public Health (IDPH) Director Tom Newton.

"As partners in public health, immunization providers hold themselves to a high standard of excellence," Newton said. "Unfortunately, those standards and many others in public health have yet to be formalized. This has to change."

The "standards" Newton cites are the Iowa Public Health Standards, developed as a part of the Redesigning Public Health in Iowa initiative. The purpose of the standards is to describe the basic services and infrastructure that all Iowans can reasonably expect from local and state public health.

Work on the standards began in 2004 and now forms the backbone of the current Modernizing Public Health in Iowa initiative. The Iowa legislature is currently considering adopting standards for public health through legislation called the Public Health Modernization Act.

For Iowa's immunization providers, this legislation means that the people they serve will have access to the same public health services no matter where they live in Iowa. In a broader sense, passage of the

Modernization Act will benefit Iowans in ways that are already being recognized by more than 20 other states. Like Iowa's Modernization initiative, their goal is voluntary accreditation of public health agencies.

As public health agencies in our state become accredited, Iowans will begin to see a number of benefits. These include increased and improved public health service delivery accompanied by a system of quality improvement and accountability.

Modernization also means increased capacity for public health to respond to disease outbreaks, natural disasters, and other events that threaten the health of Iowans. This effort will create a nimble system that can respond to public health threats as well as provide the basic population-based services Iowans have come to expect.

IDPH is requesting state funding as well as seeking funding from other entities in order to support pilot projects related to Modernization efforts, create efficiencies in public health, and help address gaps in infrastructure.

For more information about Modernizing Public Health in Iowa, including FAQs, fact sheets, information about projects in other states, and more, visit www.idph.state.ia.us/mphi.

You may also contact Joy Harris at 515-281-3377 or JHarris@idph.state.ia.us.

Merck Patient Assistance Program

The Merck Patient Assistance Program is a private and confidential program that provides medicine free of charge to eligible individuals, primarily the uninsured who, without assistance, could not afford needed Merck medicines.

Effective March 1, 2009, the Merck Patient Assistance Program increased the income eligibility requirement for the program, thereby allowing more people in need to receive Merck medicines for free. Patients may now be eligible for the Merck Patient Assistance Program if their household income is \$43,320 or less for individuals, \$58,280 or less for couples, or \$88,200 or less for a family of four (previous income limits were \$21,660, \$29,140 and \$44,100 respectively).

You can download copies of the Merck Patient Assistance Program application at www.merckhelps.com.

For more information on the Merck Patient Assistance Program, visit www.merckhelps.com or call 1-800-727-5400.

Registration Now Open!

The Iowa Statewide Immunization Conference will be held in Downtown Des Moines at the Hy-Vee Hall on

June 11, 2009

There will also be a lecture and reception the evening of June 10th. For more details and to register online, go to

www.trainingresources.org/ViewConf.aspx?id=1355

Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)



What Is VAERS

The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) is a national program that monitors the safety of vaccines after they are licensed. VAERS is managed by the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Vaccines prevent serious illnesses and even death in persons who receive them. Before a vaccine is licensed, FDA takes steps to make sure the vaccine is safe. FDA requires that a vaccine goes through extensive safety testing. After a vaccine is licensed, VAERS is one of the mechanisms used to monitor for any problems, or "adverse events," that happen after vaccination.

Not all events reported to VAERS are caused by the vaccine. Even though careful studies are done before a vaccine is licensed, rare adverse events may not be found until a vaccine is given to millions of people with different backgrounds and medical histories. By continued monitoring, VAERS helps to make sure that the benefits of vaccines are far greater than the risks.

Anyone who receives a vaccine should be informed about both the benefits and risks of vaccination. Any questions or concerns should be discussed with a healthcare provider.

Limitations and Usefulness of VAERS

VAERS is unable to determine that a vaccine caused or did not cause an adverse event.

Sometimes people who are vaccinated get sick from another cause unrelated to the vaccine.

Even though VAERS cannot determine that a vaccine caused an adverse event, it can give FDA and CDC important information that might signal a problem. If it looks as though a vaccine might be causing an adverse event, FDA and CDC will investigate further.

Does VAERS Provide Medical Advice?

No, VAERS does not provide medical advice. For medical advice should be provided by the healthcare provider.



Who Can Report to VAERS?

- Parents
- Patients
- Healthcare Providers
- Others

FDA and CDC encourage anybody who experiences a problem after vaccination to report to VAERS. Healthcare providers are required by law to report certain problems. The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act (NCVIA) requires health care providers to report:

- Any event listed by the vaccine manufacturer as a contraindication to subsequent doses of the vaccine.
- Any event listed in the Reportable Events Table that occurs within the specified time period after vaccination.

A copy of the Reportable Events Table can be found in the CDC Pink Book or obtained by calling VAERS at 1-800-822-7967 or by downloading it from <http://vaers.hhs.gov/pubs.htm>.

Why Should I Report to VAERS?

- Reporting gives valuable information that helps CDC and FDA make sure that vaccines are safe.
- Reporting strengthens VAERS so it can be used to assess public health response to vaccines.
- Reporting allows for evaluating public health prevention and control measures.

Remember, no vaccine (or any medicine) is completely free of risk and adverse events are possible. If you have an adverse event after a vaccine, please report to VAERS—each report is important!

VAERS forms can be ordered by calling 1-800-822-7967, or download a printable copy of the VAERS form from the following Internet sites <http://vaers.hhs.gov/>, www.fda.gov/cber/vaers/vaers.htm or www.cdc.gov/vaccines/

For more information: Send e-mail inquiries to info@vaers.org or visit the VAERS Web site at: <http://vaers.hhs.gov>

Call the toll-free VAERS information line at (800) 822-7967. Fax inquiries to the toll-free information fax line at (877) 721-0366.

For information regarding VAERS at the Iowa Immunization Program, contact Terri Thornton at 1-800-831-6293, ext 2.

