



Vaccines for Children Provider Notice

Pennsylvania Department of Health,
Bureau of Communicable Diseases, Division of Immunizations

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Influenza Resources

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provides a webpage dedicated to influenza. [This influenza page](#) covers numerous topics, such as flu activity and surveillance data, information specific to healthcare professionals and a communications resource center. Providers may find the “What’s New” section particularly interesting. For example, the article [Misconceptions about Seasonal Flu and Flu Vaccines](#) can be very useful when discussing the influenza vaccine and its effects. The CDC also offers a helpful influenza fact sheet providers can use as an educational tool when interacting with parents and caregivers. This influenza fact sheet can be downloaded in both an [English version](#) and a [Spanish version](#).

The Department of Health maintains a [flu page for the commonwealth](#), with news and updates posted throughout the flu season.

For additional resources on influenza, please visit the [CDC resource center](#).



Ordering Vaccine Doses in PA-SIIS

When ordering VFC vaccine online, providers should be certain of the correct doses being requested through PA-SIIS. The following list can serve as a reminder for established sites and also as a guide for new VFC providers.

Vaccines to order in multiples of five doses:

- Pentacel
- ActHIB
- Menveo
- Menactra
- Adacel (SYR)

Vaccines to order in any number of doses (eg. one dose, three doses, 17 doses, etc):

- PPV23
- Td

All other vaccines are ordered in multiples of 10 doses only.

Provider Q & A: Emergency Plans and Generators

Question: We have a new generator, and it can maintain our units in the event of an emergency or power outage. Do we still need to maintain a back-up plan for emergencies since the generator has been installed?

Answer: All sites must maintain an emergency back-up plan, even those with generators available.

Details on what steps VFC sites should take, both before and during an emergency, can be found in Section 4 of the VFC handbook - [Vaccine Storage and Handling](#).

Preparing for emergencies should include the following:

- Identify and establish an agreement with an alternative vaccine storage facility with proper refrigerator and freezer units, proper temperature-monitoring capabilities and backup generator where vaccine can be stored in an

emergency. An alternate site that is available 24/7 is preferred; an example would be a hospital. Call quarterly to make sure this facility is still available. Designate staff to be responsible for packing and moving the vaccine to a safe location. Ensure written descriptions of floor plans and vaccine locations are available, as well as 24-hour access to the building and vaccine storage units.

- Have the appropriate packing material on hand at all times, including insulated containers, cold/ice packs, bubble wrap, conditioned frozen water bottles and illustrated instructions for packing vaccines for transport. Have flashlights and spare batteries easily accessible.
- Develop a written emergency vaccine retrieval and storage plan which includes how to access the facility and storage area. Create protocols for proper handling of vaccines during transportation using VFC policy guides with the Vaccine Transport Hourly Monitoring form and written transportation route to the alternate storage facility.
- Create an emergency call chain including provider staff, cold storage unit service contact information and local utility company emergency phone numbers.

In addition, providers should review this CDC guide on [packing and transporting vaccines during an emergency](#).

Latest Update: Measles Outbreak

From January 1 to October 3, 2019, 1,250 individual cases of measles have been confirmed in 31 states. This is an increase of seven cases from the previous week. However, only three of these cases were recently ill. The rest were identified as past cases.

The states that have reported cases to CDC are Alaska, Arizona, California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Georgia, Hawaii, Idaho, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Missouri, New Mexico, Nevada, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Ohio, Oklahoma, Oregon, **Pennsylvania**, Texas, Tennessee, Virginia, and Washington. All measles cases this year have been caused by measles wild-type D8 or B3.

One parent's account of losing a child to measles

"Olivia, my eldest daughter, caught measles when she was 7 years old. As the illness took its usual course, I can remember reading to her often in bed and not feeling particularly alarmed about it. Then one morning, when she was well on the road to recovery, I was sitting on her bed showing her how to fashion little animals out of coloured pipe-cleaners, and when it came to her turn to make one herself, I noticed that her fingers and her mind were not working together and she couldn't do anything. "Are you feeling all right?" I asked her. "I feel all sleepy," she said. In an hour, she was unconscious. In 12 hours she was dead.

The measles had turned into a terrible thing called measles encephalitis and there was nothing the doctors could do to save her. That was 24 years ago in 1962, but even now, if a child with measles happens to develop the same deadly reaction from measles as Olivia did, there would still be nothing the doctors could do to help her.

On the other hand, there is today something that parents can do to make sure that this sort of tragedy does not happen to a child of theirs. They can insist that their child is immunised against measles. I was unable to do that for Olivia in 1962 because in those days a reliable measles vaccine had not been discovered. Today a good and safe vaccine is available to every family and all you have to do is to ask your doctor to administer it."

~ Roald Dahl, written in 1986. Dahl is author of *Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory*, *James and the Giant Peach*, and other famous books.

Please add the Vaccines For Children email to your address book: RA-pavfc@pa.gov