



Maximizing Routine Immunization During the COVID-19 Pandemic



The COVID-19 pandemic has impeded the delivery of routine care, including immunizations. Across California, routine childhood immunizations have decreased significantly since the pandemic began.

Routine vaccinations prevent illnesses that lead to unnecessary medical visits, hospitalizations and further strain on the health care system. Health care professionals and families need to work together in this new environment to ensure children get caught up or stay on track with vaccines.

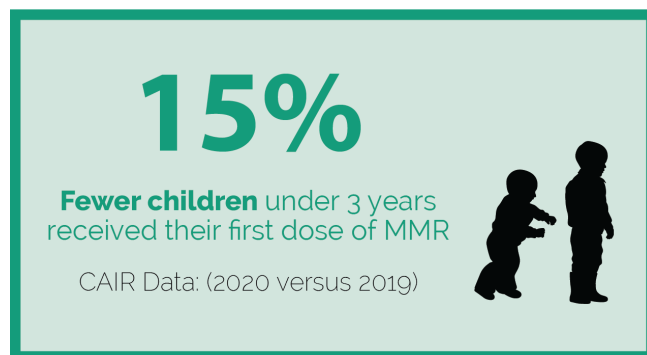
Here are some steps to take to reinforce the importance of maintaining routine immunizations during the pandemic and to protect patients' health:

For office staff:

- Use immunization registry and electronic health record reminder and recall features to identify and contact patients who are overdue for influenza vaccination.
- Identify and contact families whose children have missed vaccine doses or who are due for influenza vaccination. Add children to this list who will be due for a second influenza vaccination dose.
- Create drive-up and drive-through clinic opportunities for persons needing walk-in vaccine services for influenza and other routine immunizations.
- Let families know what precautions are in place for safe delivery of in-person services.
- Escalate families that are concerned or refusing vaccines to have a nurse or other clinician contact the family to discuss their concerns.
- Pregnant patients should be scheduled for follow-up and receive vaccination during the next in-person appointment.

For health care providers:

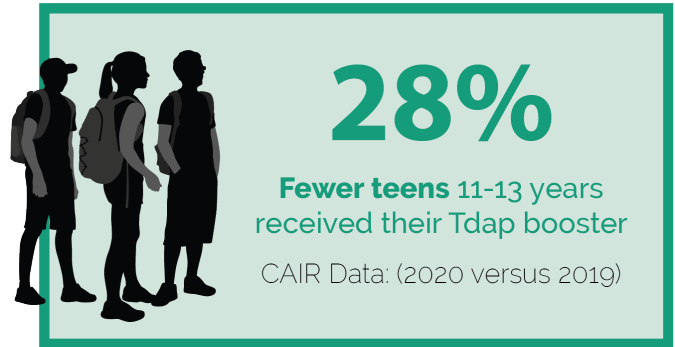
- Review every patient's immunization history at every health care visit to assess for needed vaccines. This includes both routine check-ups and acute-care visits.
- Vaccinations should not be postponed if records are not available. However, attempt to locate missing records.
- Establish Immunization Standing Orders for staff to use to ensure consistent services to every patient.
- Always screen patients for contraindications and precautions before a vaccine is administered, even if the same vaccine was previously administered.
- Make a strong recommendation for influenza immunization - your strong recommendation is a critical factor that affects whether your patients get an influenza vaccine.
- When patients are seen for any in-person visit, ensure that they receive all due or overdue vaccines, including seasonal influenza vaccine.





For the Care Team:

- Know your clinic's immunization rates. Look at your rates on a monthly basis!
- Use the Alliance's Portal Reports to calculate immunization rates.
- Script your vaccine messages for all office staff to reference.
- Get training on the Portal and your local Immunization Registry to optimize your tracking system. Reach out to your Provider Relations Representative at 800-700-3874, ext. 5504 (Monday – Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m.)



Resources:

- Parent fact sheet about vaccinations during the pandemic: <https://eziz.org/assets/docs/IMM-1287.pdf>
- Safe delivery of in-person services: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html>
- Off-site or Temporary Vaccination Clinics: <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/admin/mass-clinic-activities/index.html>
- Social media and patient messaging: <https://www.immunizeca.org/DontWaitVaccinate/>
- More vaccine resources from EZIZ: <https://eziz.org/resources/immunizations-during-covid-19/>

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