



THE CITY OF NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Michael R. Bloomberg
Mayor

Thomas R. Frieden, M.D., M.P.H.
Commissioner

nyc.gov/health

**** PLEASE DISTRIBUTE TO ALL PEDIATRIC, FAMILY PRACTICE AND OFFICE STAFF ****

November 1, 2006

Dear Colleague:

It is time to begin vaccination for the 2006-2007 influenza season and I would like to provide you with updated vaccine recommendations and supply information. This year over 100 million doses will be available, a record amount. Distribution has begun, with nearly 70% of the supply already shipped. Providers should begin vaccination as soon as they receive vaccine, and should continue to vaccinate throughout the influenza season into late spring.

This year the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices have expanded their annual influenza vaccination recommendations to include all children 6-59 months of age. All close contacts of children from birth to 59 months of age, including family members and out-of-home caretakers should be vaccinated. Children 5 years of age and older with chronic medical conditions should also be vaccinated. All children <9 years of age receiving influenza vaccine for the first time this season require 2 doses.

Most private providers have already ordered vaccine. Some distributors still have vaccine available for purchase but the supply for children <18 years may be limited. If you receive vaccine from the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, you should have already placed your order. If not, you should immediately do so. The DOHMH has received only a portion of its VFC vaccine. We have begun sending partial shipments so that all providers can begin vaccination, especially for those children who require 2 doses. As more vaccine is received, it will be shipped to providers on a first come first served basis.

It should be noted that Dr. Novello, New York State Commissioner of Health, has written a letter to all New York State insurers strongly recommending that they fully cover the providers' cost of all influenza vaccines, regardless of manufacturer, for persons 6 months of age and older. If you encounter any difficulties with regard to insurer coverage please contact the Bureau of Immunization at the number listed below.

- Current recommendations can be found in the September 2006 issue of City Health Information vol. 25(8):59-64 at www.nyc.gov/html/doh/downloads/pdf/chi/chi25-8.pdf.
- Updates on immunization recommendations, flu activity, and vaccine availability will be provided throughout the season at: www.nyc.gov/health/flu.
- Helpful information on immunizing children against influenza can be found on the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases website, www.nfid.org, Click on: Kids Need Influenza Vaccine Too.
- All doses of vaccine administered to children <19 years of age must be reported to the Citywide Immunization Registry. Call 212-676-2323 for assistance.

For questions please call the Bureau of Immunization at 212-676-2259. To register with VFC, or for supply questions and ordering procedures, please call 212-447-8175. Providers who order vaccine for the private sector should contact the manufacturer or distributors directly. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Jane R. Zucker, M.D., M.Sc.
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization