



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE
Thomas Farley, MD, MPH
Commissioner

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

August 4, 2009

Dear Colleague:

The Bureau of Immunization (BOI) would like all providers to be aware of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) 2009 recommendations for seasonal influenza vaccination. All children 6 months through 18 years of age should receive annual influenza vaccination. Vaccination efforts should begin as soon as vaccine is available and continue through late spring. This same age group is also a priority group for novel influenza A H1N1 vaccination; information about availability of this vaccine will be available at a later date.

The BOI appreciates the challenges presented by these expanded influenza vaccine recommendations. Be certain to order enough seasonal vaccine in a timely manner so that you can vaccinate all the children in your practice. Children younger than 9 years of age who are receiving the flu vaccine for the first time – or who received the flu vaccine for the first time last season but received only one dose – should receive two doses this flu season in order to be fully protected; these doses should be given four weeks apart. Data from the Citywide Immunization Registry (CIR) indicate that fewer than one-third of New York City children 6 to 59 months of age were fully vaccinated during the 2008-2009 influenza season. This underscores the need to intensify efforts to vaccinate this age group. Also, note that New York State Public Health Law §2112, effective July 1, 2008, prohibits the administration of vaccines containing more than trace amounts of thimerosal to children less than 3 years of age and to women who know they are pregnant. Therefore, be sure to order a sufficient supply of preservative-free, single-dose preparations of flu vaccine to adequately immunize these groups.

Attached, please find the **Seasonal Influenza Vaccine Order Form** to be used to order vaccine through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program for the 2009–2010 season. Please submit an order for **all** of the influenza vaccine you think you will need for the entire 2009–2010 season. As vaccine is received, we will send partial orders until your entire order has been filled. You may call the VFC Program at 212-447-8175 at any time to verify your balance. We expect to have a sufficient supply of seasonal flu vaccine this year. If you require more vaccine, place the order indicating that it is an “Additional Order” and it will be processed as soon as possible. Fax your order to 212-447-8196.

The 2009 ACIP recommendations for the Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines is available at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr5808.pdf

All doses of any vaccine administered to children less than 19 years of age in NYC must be reported to the CIR, see www.nyc.gov/health/cir. For CIR assistance call 212-676-2323; for clinical questions, please call 212-676-2259.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane R. Zucker'.

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