

VACCINATE ADULTS!

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20 Years Later – the Final Issue of *Vaccinate Adults*

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Editor, *Vaccinate Adults*

This is your final issue of *Vaccinate Adults*, the Immunization Action Coalition’s (IAC) periodical for adult medicine specialists. Since 1997, I’ve been involved in every aspect of the 52 issues we’ve published, and I’d like to share with you some history of these 20 years – how *Vaccinate Adults* began, how it grew over the years, why we are saying goodbye, and what’s next. I would also like to thank some who have been deeply involved for many years in the work of *Vaccinate Adults*, making it such an inspired, successful, and long-lived publication for readers like you.

How we started...

Vaccinate Adults was preceded by IAC’s flagship periodical, *Needle Tips*, which made its first appearance in print in September 1994. The first issue of *Vaccinate Adults* was published in 1997, after it became apparent that *Needle Tips* wasn’t being utilized by adult medicine providers because of the preponderance of content related to childhood immunization. Our internal medicine colleagues recommended that IAC create a publication similar to *Needle Tips*, but containing only adult immunization material. The premier issue of *Vaccinate Adults* was printed and mailed to approximately 100,000 healthcare professionals throughout the United States in November 1997.

Following this premier issue, and through 2008, *Vaccinate Adults* was printed and mailed twice per year to internal medicine and infectious disease practices, pulmonologists, cardiologists, state and local health departments, and many others, with a circulation of up to 200,000.

According to IAC surveys, the most popular feature of *Vaccinate Adults* has been its “Ask the Experts” column, where experts from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) provide answers to practical questions about hepatitis B and all other routinely recommended vaccines.

From 1997–2008, we added a bit of levity to the cover of each issue by showing a singular cartoon drawing provided by the New York Department of Health but changing the dialogue bubbles to make an important point about an adult immunization topic. To further complement our serious content, we sometimes sprinkled funny riddles throughout issues, all of which were illustrated by my artistic children, Sarah, Isaac, and Leo, up until each left for college.

Printing and mailing costs became a problem...

By 2008, the cost of printing and mailing hard copies of publications had become too expensive compared to electronic distribution. As a result, CDC changed its policy and informed us that its financial support for printing and mailing *Vaccinate Adults* would be discontinued the following year, making it necessary for us to convert to electronic distribution only. The last printed edition of *Vaccinate Adults* was mailed in December 2008.

In 2009, *Vaccinate Adults* went online at www.immunize.org/va and we began building our email subscriber list. (All *Vaccinate Adults* back issues remain available at www.immunize.org/va/back-issues.asp.) We expanded the number of *Vaccinate*

Final issue...continued on page 2 ▶

Ask the Experts

The Immunization Action Coalition extends thanks to our experts, medical officers Andrew T. Kroger, MD, MPH; Candice L. Robinson, MD, MPH; Raymond A. Strikas, MD, MPH, FACP, FIDSA; and nurse educators Donna L. Weaver, RN, MN, and JoEllen Wolicki, BSN, RN, all with the National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).

Influenza vaccines

What’s new in the 2017–18 influenza vaccine recommendations pertaining to adult vaccination?

The 2017–18 ACIP influenza vaccine recommendations were published on August 25, 2017, and are available online at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/rr/pdfs/rr6602.pdf. The new guidance

- Describes the vaccine composition for this season (a change in the A/H1N1 component);
- Discusses recent FDA licensure and labeling changes including approval of Afluria Quadrivalent (Seqirus) and Flublok Quadrivalent (Protein Sciences); and
- Recommends that live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV, FluMist; AstraZeneca) not be used during the 2017–18 season.

Ask the Experts...continued on page 4 ▶

What’s In This Issue

20 Years Later – the Final Issue of <i>Vaccinate Adults</i>	1
Ask the Experts:	
CDC Answers Your Questions	1
Influenza Educational Materials for Patients and Staff	6
Influenza Vaccine Products for the 2017–18 Influenza Season.....	7
Screening Checklist for Contraindications to Influenza Vaccine	8
Standing Orders Template for Administering Influenza Vaccine	9
How to Administer Influenza Vaccines – Intramuscular, Intradermal, and Intranasal.....	10
VISs Are Available in Many Languages	11
Now in 7 Languages for Patients!	
IZ Schedule for Adults	12
IZ Schedule for Pregnant Women	13
Products You Can Purchase from IAC	14
IAC’s Immunization Resources Order Form.....	15

Ask the Experts...continued from page 1

Which influenza vaccines will be available during the 2017–18 influenza season?

Multiple manufacturers are producing influenza vaccine for the U.S. market for the 2017–18 season. Inactivated vaccines will be produced using egg-based, cell culture-based, and recombinant technologies. Some of the inactivated influenza vaccines will be quadrivalent (containing four strains of influenza virus) rather than trivalent (three strains). LAIV may be available but is not recommended for use during the 2017–18 season. A complete listing of influenza vaccine products is available from the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) at www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4072.pdf.

Who is recommended to be vaccinated against influenza?

ACIP recommends annual vaccination for all people ages 6 months and older who do not have a contraindication to the vaccine.

When should influenza vaccine be given?

You can begin administering vaccine as soon as it becomes available. Optimally, vaccination should occur before onset of influenza activity in the community. Healthcare providers should offer vaccination by the end of October, if possible, and vaccination activity should continue through the fall and winter months, as long as influenza virus is circulating in the community.

When administering influenza vaccine, is giving patients a VIS mandatory or is it only “recommended”?

Giving patients an influenza Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) is mandatory under the National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act of 1986. The VIS must be given to all adults (as well as to parents or guardians of children) prior to vaccination. Two VISs are available, one for LAIV (although LAIV is not recommended to be used during the 2017–18 season) and one for inactivated influenza vaccine (IIV). Each can be found at www.immunize.org/vis along with many translations. The influenza VIS has been modified so that it does not need to be replaced each year. The 2015–16 influenza VIS (used for the past two years) should be used during the 2017–18 season.

Is influenza vaccine recommended for pregnant women?

Yes. It is especially important to vaccinate pregnant women because of their increased risk for influ-

enza-related complications. An increased risk of severe influenza infection was also observed in postpartum women (those who delivered within the previous 2 weeks) during the 2009–10 H1N1 pandemic. Vaccination can occur in any trimester, including the first. Only inactivated vaccine should be given to pregnant women.

I heard that a recent study suggested an increase in miscarriage among women who received inactivated influenza vaccine. Please provide details.

A CDC-funded study found that women who had been vaccinated early in pregnancy with an influenza vaccine containing the pandemic H1N1 (H1N1pdm09) component and who also had been vaccinated the prior season with an H1N1pdm09-containing influenza vaccine had an increased risk of spontaneous abortion (miscarriage) in the 28 days after vaccination. This study does not quantify the risk of miscarriage and does not prove that influenza vaccine was the cause of the miscarriage. Earlier studies have not found a link between influenza vaccination and miscarriage. There is an ongoing investigation to study this issue further among women who were pregnant and eligible to receive influenza vaccine during the 2012–13 through 2014–15 influenza seasons. Results are anticipated in late 2018 or 2019.

CDC and ACIP have not changed the recommendation for influenza vaccination of pregnant women. It is recommended that pregnant women receive influenza vaccine during any trimester of their pregnancy because influenza poses a danger to pregnant women and the vaccine can prevent influenza in pregnant women.

Please tell me about Flud, the new influenza vaccine for people age 65 years and older.

In November 2015, FDA licensed Flud (Seqirus), a trivalent, MF59-adjuvanted inactivated influenza vaccine, for people age 65 years and older. Flud is the first adjuvanted influenza vaccine marketed in the U.S. An adjuvant is a substance added to a vaccine to increase its immunogenicity. The MF59 adjuvant is based on squalene, an oil that occurs naturally in many plants and animals. Flud has been used in Europe since 1997 and is approved in 38 other countries. In contrast to Fluzone High-Dose (Sanofi Pasteur), Flud is a standard-dose vaccine, containing 15 mcg of hemagglutinin per dose.

A study published in 2014 found that the injectable vaccine Fluzone High-Dose protects people 65 years and older better than standard-dose Fluzone. Does ACIP preferentially recommend use of Fluzone High-Dose for all people age 65 years and older?

Aging decreases the body's ability to develop a good immune response after getting influenza vaccine, which places older people at greater risk of severe illness from influenza. A higher dose of antigen in the vaccine should give older people a better immune response and therefore provide bet-

ter protection against influenza. However, despite published evidence of better protection from Fluzone High-Dose when compared to standard-dose Fluzone (*N Engl J Med* 2014; 371:635–45), ACIP has not stated a preference for this vaccine for people age 65 years and older.

May Fluzone High-Dose or Flud be administered to patients younger than age 65 years?

No. Fluzone High-Dose and Flud are licensed only for people age 65 years and older and are not recommended for younger people.

What is the latest ACIP guidance on influenza vaccination and egg allergy?

ACIP revised its guidance on vaccination of people with egg allergy for the 2016–17 season. This guidance did not change for the 2017–18 season. ACIP recommends that people with a history of egg allergy who have experienced only hives after exposure to egg should receive any inactivated influenza vaccine without specific precautions (except a 15-minute observation period for syncope). People who report having had an anaphylactic reaction to egg (more severe than hives) may also receive any age-appropriate influenza vaccine. The vaccine for those individuals should be administered in a medical setting (such as a physician office or health department clinic). Vaccine administration should be supervised by a healthcare provider who is able to recognize and manage severe allergic conditions. Although not specifically recommended by ACIP, providers may prefer to administer an egg-free recombinant vaccine (Flublok; Protein Sciences) for people age 18 years and older with severe egg allergy.

A previous severe allergic reaction to influenza vaccine, regardless of the component suspected to be responsible for the reaction, is a contraindication to future receipt of the vaccine. For a complete list of vaccine components (i.e., excipients and culture media) used in the production of the vaccine, check the package insert (at www.immunize.org/packageinserts) or go to www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/downloads/appendices/B/excipient-table-2.pdf.

For more details about giving influenza vaccine to people with a history of egg allergy, see www.cdc.gov/mmwr/volumes/66/rr/pdfs/rr6602.pdf, pages 10–12. You also may find the IAC handout “Influenza Vaccination of People with a History of Egg Allergy” helpful (see www.immunize.org/catg.d/p3094.pdf).

Should staff at drive-through influenza vaccination clinics encourage drivers to park and wait for 15 minutes after vaccination to make sure they don't have a syncopal (fainting) episode?

Yes. Syncope has been reported following vaccination. It is prudent for all persons to be observed for syncope for at least 15 minutes after vaccination.

Ask the Experts...continued on page 5 ►

Immunization questions?

- Email nipinfo@cdc.gov
- Call your state health department (phone numbers at www.immunize.org/coordinators)

Ask the Experts...continued from page 4

We inadvertently administered intradermal influenza vaccine to a patient who is outside the recommended age range of 18 through 64 years. What should we do now?

Because people younger than age 12 years or older than 65 years are more likely to have skin that is too thin for proper intradermal administration, a dose of Fluzone ID (Sanofi Pasteur) given to a person in these age ranges should be considered invalid, and the patient should be revaccinated. For people age 12 through 17 years, the dose can be counted as valid on the presumption that their skin thickness is similar to someone 18 through 64 years of age.

How should influenza vaccines be stored?

Both IIV and LAIV should be refrigerated at 2° to 8°C (36° to 46°F). Neither vaccine should be frozen.

Some of my patients refuse influenza vaccination because they insist they “got the flu” after receiving the injectable vaccine in the past. What can I tell them?

There are several reasons why this misconception persists:

- Less than 1% of people who are vaccinated with the injectable vaccine develop flu-like symptoms, such as mild fever and muscle aches, after vaccination. These side effects are not the same as having influenza, but people confuse the symptoms.
- Protective immunity doesn't develop until 1–2 weeks after vaccination. Some people who get vaccinated later in the season (December or later) may be infected with influenza virus shortly afterward. These late vaccinees develop influenza because they were exposed to someone with the virus before they became immune. It is not the result of the vaccination.
- For many people, “the flu” is any illness with fever and cold symptoms or gastrointestinal symptoms. If they get any viral illness, they may blame it on flu vaccine or think they got “the flu” despite being vaccinated. Influenza vaccine only protects against certain influenza viruses, not all viruses.
- Influenza vaccine is not 100% effective, especially in older persons.

For more information on this topic, go to: www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/vaccination/effectiveness_qa.htm.

Does ACIP recommend one influenza product over another for pregnant women?

Pregnant women can receive any inactivated or recombinant influenza vaccine. They should not be given LAIV (FluMist).

If quadrivalent vaccine includes one additional strain, why isn't it preferred for use over trivalent vaccines?

Two different types of influenza B virus are likely to cause disease during an influenza season, but

About IAC's Question of the Week

Each week, *IAC Express* highlights a new, topical, or important-to-reiterate Q&A. This feature is a cooperative venture between IAC and CDC. William L. Atkinson, MD, MPH, IAC's associate director for immunization education, chooses a new Q&A to feature every week from a set of Q&As prepared by experts at CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases.

Ask the Experts

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trivalent influenza vaccines contain only one type of influenza B virus. The quadrivalent vaccine includes both types of B virus. While quadrivalent vaccines may eventually replace trivalent vaccines, during the current season, the quantity of quadrivalent vaccine available may be limited. Consequently, ACIP does not express a preference for use of one type of influenza vaccine over another type (that is, quadrivalent over trivalent) for those for whom more than one type of vaccine is indicated and available.

Sometimes patients age 65 years and older who have received the standard-dose influenza vaccine hear about the high-dose (Fluzone High-Dose) or adjuvanted vaccine (Fluad) and want to receive that, too. Is this okay to administer?

No. ACIP does not recommend that any adult receive more than one dose of influenza vaccine in a season.

The pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV13) package insert says that in adults, antibody responses to PCV13 were diminished when given with inactivated influenza vaccine. Does this mean we should not give PCV13 and influenza vaccine at the same visit?

The available data have been interpreted that any changes in antibody response to either of the vaccines' components were clinically insignificant. The antibody response was only lowered for three components, and ONLY in patients younger than 65 years of age. In this age group, if PCV13 is recommended, it means there is a high risk of invasive pneumococcal disease for those unvaccinated. If PCV13 and influenza vaccine are both indicated and recommended, they should be administered at the same visit. See the PCV13 ACIP recommendations at www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/wk/mm6337.pdf, page 824.

Some of our patients believe that they have had reactions to influenza vaccine in the past and request the dose to be split into 2 doses administered on different days. Is this an acceptable practice?

This is definitely not an acceptable practice. Doses of influenza vaccine (or any other vaccine) should never be split into “half doses.” If a “half dose” is administered, it should not be accepted as a valid dose and should be repeated as soon as possible with a full age-appropriate dose.

Is it acceptable to draw up vaccine into syringes at the beginning of the day? If it isn't, how much in advance can this be done?

CDC discourages the practice of prefilling vaccine into syringes for several reasons, including

- The increased possibility of administration and dosing errors,
- The increased risk of inappropriate storage,
- The probability of bacterial contamination since the syringe will not contain a bacteriostatic agent, and
- The probability of reducing the vaccine's potency over time because of its interaction with the plastic syringe components.

Prefilling vaccine into syringes also violates basic medication administration guidelines, which state that an individual should administer only those medications he or she has prepared and drawn up.

Although pre-drawing vaccine is discouraged, a limited amount of vaccine may be pre-drawn in a mass-immunization clinic setting under the following conditions:

- Only a single type of vaccine (for example, influenza) is administered at the mass-immunization clinic setting,
- Vaccine is not drawn up in advance of its arrival at the mass-vaccination clinic site,
- These pre-drawn syringes are stored at temperatures appropriate for the vaccine they hold,
- No more than 1 vial or 10 doses (whichever is greater) is drawn into syringes, and
- Clinic staff monitor patient flow carefully and avoid drawing up unnecessary doses or delaying administration of pre-drawn doses.
- At the end of the clinic day, any remaining vaccine in syringes prefilled by staff should be discarded.