

## Keep Immunizations on Track During COVID-19

**Please see the CDC Guidance for Pharmacies concerning adult vaccinations for ongoing updates  
Pharmacists are facing a dilemma over providing vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic.**

Vaccination is critical for some vulnerable patients...kids 2 and under, adults over 65, immunocompromised, etc.

But data already suggest a drop in vaccination rates in kids.

This is raising concerns about disease outbreaks...such as measles or mumps...on top of COVID-19. And flu season isn't far away.

Current CDC guidance suggests postponing visits for adult vaccines in many cases. But patients may already be coming to your pharmacy.

Use your judgment based on the local situation...and vaccination benefits and risks. Follow your pharmacy policies and state guidance.

For example, if a 70-year-old with COPD and no acute illness is at your pharmacy, consider giving pneumococcal vaccine if it's due.

Keep in mind, the pandemic alone doesn't change which vaccines you should or shouldn't give. Stick with usual CDC vaccine recommendations.

Consider ways to limit exposure risk...such as coordinating vaccination with Rx pickup or giving vaccines at less crowded times.

Continue to be diligent with handwashing...clean patient care areas and high-touch items regularly...and follow your pharmacy policy for use of personal protective equipment.

As stay-at-home guidance relaxes, prepare to ramp up services.

Create a callback list for deferred vaccines or delayed doses (*Shingrix*, etc). Give missed doses as soon as it's practical...but don't restart the series for any routine vaccines.

Prioritize vaccines where incomplete immunity is a concern...such as a second dose of MMR for 4- to 6-year-old kids. If needed, follow CDC's catch-up immunization schedule for children.

For adults, evaluate if multiple vaccines (pneumococcal, Tdap, *Shingrix*, etc) are due...so you can give them at one visit.

Plan ahead for having a BIG role if and when a COVID-19 vaccine hits...and evaluate ways to refine your workflow now.

Get our resource, *Vaccine Adherence: Addressing Myths and Hesitancy*, to clarify misconceptions during your patient discussions.

### Key References:

- [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/schedule-changes.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/schedule-changes.html) (5-26-20)
- MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep 2020;69(19):591-3
- [www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient\\_care/public\\_health/AAFP-COVID-Non-Urgent-Care-Statement.pdf](http://www.aafp.org/dam/AAFP/documents/patient_care/public_health/AAFP-COVID-Non-Urgent-Care-Statement.pdf) (5-26-20)
- <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/2019-novel-coronavirus-covid-19-infections/guidance-on-providing-pediatric-well-care-during-covid-19/> (5-26-20)

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-[www.pharmacist.com/sites/default/files/audience/APhACovid-19VaccinationBasicsrevised0420\\_web.pdf](http://www.pharmacist.com/sites/default/files/audience/APhACovid-19VaccinationBasicsrevised0420_web.pdf) (5-26-20)

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