



SANDRA SHEWRY, MPH, MSW  
Acting Director

State of California—Health and Human Services Agency  
California Department of Public Health



GAVIN NEWSOM  
Governor

## Health Update: Maximizing Routine Immunization During the COVID-19 Pandemic – November 12, 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has impeded the delivery of routine care, including immunizations. Increased efforts are needed to ensure that missed immunizations are caught up and scheduled doses given on time.

Immunization against seasonal influenza will reduce stress on the healthcare and public health systems during the COVID-19 pandemic. California Immunization Registry (CAIR2)<sup>[1]</sup> data show that influenza immunization in fall 2020 is being given at similar rates to 2019, but that the pace of delivery decreased in October 2020 despite ample supplies. Providers and healthcare systems should especially consider efforts to immunize patients who are at increased risk for

- severe influenza
- severe COVID-19,
- exposure to COVID-19 because of their work or living situation.

The pandemic has reduced receipt of routine childhood immunizations across California. CAIR2 data show that from January-October 2020, as compared with the same time interval in 2019, 15% fewer children under 3 years received their first dose of MMR, 24% fewer children ages 4-6 received their second dose of MMR, and 28% fewer children ages 11-13 received their Tdap booster. Although the largest decrease in routine childhood immunizations occurred in the spring, immunization since then has been insufficient to catch up on the doses missed.

To protect their patients, healthcare systems and healthcare providers can:

- Use immunization registry and electronic health record reminder/recall features to
  - Identify and contact patients who are due for influenza vaccination
  - Identify and contact families whose children have missed vaccine doses or who are due for influenza vaccination
- Implement novel immunization strategies such as drive-up and drive-through clinics for influenza and other routine immunizations
- Ensure that when patients are seen for an in-person visit they receive all vaccines that are due or overdue, including seasonal influenza vaccine



- Make a [strong recommendation for influenza immunization](#)
- Let families know what [precautions are in place for safe delivery of in-person services](#)

**Resources to support influenza immunization and immunization catch-up efforts**

[CDC: Interim Guidance for Routine and Influenza Immunization Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[CDC: Guidance for Planning Vaccination Clinics Held at Satellite, Temporary, or Off-Site Locations](#)

[CDC: Resources for Encouraging Pediatric Vaccinations During the COVID-19 Pandemic](#)

[CDPH: Mass Vaccination Planning During the COVID-19 Pandemic \(compilation of guidance resources\)](#)

[CDPH: Influenza During the COVID-19 Pandemic \(compilation of guidance resources\)](#)

[California Immunization Registry \(CAIR2\): Upgraded reminder/recall feature](#)

[Vaccines For Children \(VFC\): Immunizations During COVID-19](#)

[California Immunization Coalition: #dontwaitvaccinate \(social media campaign and other promotional materials for use by providers\)](#)

---

<sup>[1]</sup> Data are from providers in 49 of California's 58 counties. Excludes data from providers in counties using the San Diego Immunization Registry (San Diego) and the Healthy Futures registry (Amador, Alpine, Calaveras, Mariposa, Merced, San Joaquin, Stanislaus, and Tuolumne counties).