



Alaska Immunization Program

Update from the Program Manager

The Alaska Immunization Program recently received a 15-month Centers for Disease Control and Prevention immunization grant to increase human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination coverage rates among adolescents in Alaska. This grant will focus on efforts to accelerate HPV vaccination uptake using a variety of strategies targeted to health care providers, parents, teens, and the general public about the importance of HPV vaccine in preventing cancer. HPV-related cancer is largely preventable, especially when the vaccine is given as recommended to both girls and boys at 11-12 years of age, before there is any risk of exposure. In 2013, the National Immunization Survey showed that less than a third of adolescent girls in Alaska have completed the recommended three-dose HPV vaccine series, and few boys have received all three doses.

Hot Topic: Measles

The best way to protect yourself against measles is to get the measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR) vaccine. The MMR vaccine is very effective and has helped to reduce the number of cases in the United States dramatically over the past decades. Recently though, an increase in outbreaks of measles both domestically and abroad has caused concern.

U.S. Multi-state Measles Outbreak December 28, 2014 - February 13, 2015



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Immunization Helpline FAQ's.

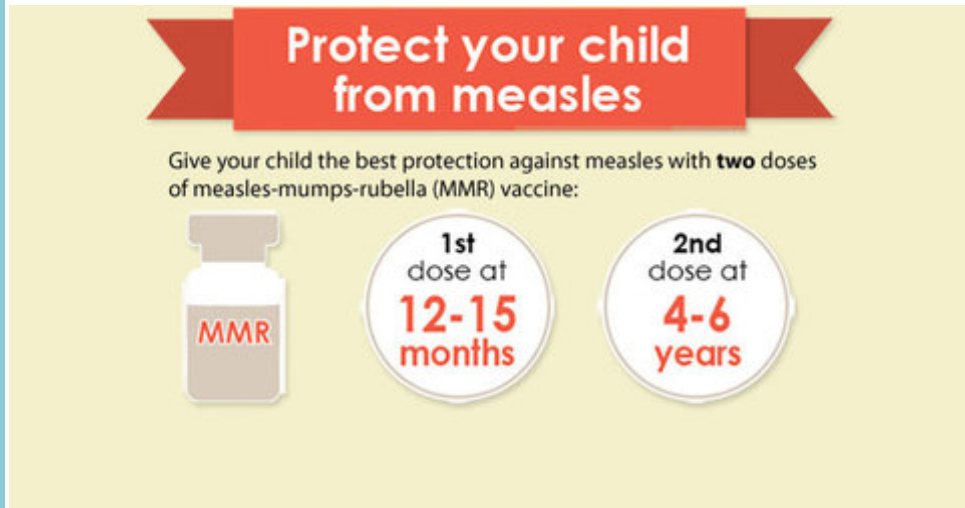
Could I still get measles if I am fully vaccinated?

Very few people—about three out of 100—who get two doses of measles vaccine will still get measles if exposed to the virus. Experts aren't sure why; it could be that their immune systems didn't respond as well as they should have to the vaccine. But the good news is, fully vaccinated people who get measles are much more likely to have a milder illness, and they are also less likely to spread the disease to other people, including people who can't get vaccinated because they are too young or have

Measles is a highly contagious viral respiratory illness. Common symptoms include fever, cough, and runny nose followed by a rash over most of the body. Although no complications occur for most, pneumonia can develop in one out of 20 infected people, and for every 1,000 infected people, one or two will die.

Measles is a reportable condition, and confirmed or suspected measles cases should be reported immediately to the Alaska Section of Epidemiology at (907) 269-8000.

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices recommends all children get two doses of MMR vaccine starting with the first dose at 12 through 15 months of age, and the second dose at 4 through 6 years of age. Children can receive the second dose earlier as long as it is at least 28 days after the first dose.



How do I know if I am up-to-date on my measles vaccination?

Presumptive evidence of immunity against measles includes at least one of the following:

- (a) Written documentation of adequate vaccination:
 - one or more doses of measles-containing vaccine administered on or after the first birthday for pre-school aged children and adults not at high risk
 - two doses of measles-containing vaccine for school aged children and adults at high-risk, including college students, healthcare personnel, and international travelers.
- (b) Laboratory evidence of immunity
- (c) Laboratory confirmation of measles.
- (d) Birth in the United States before 1957.

Healthcare providers should not accept verbal reports of vaccination without written documentation as presumptive evidence of immunity.



The main page of the Alaska Immunization Program website includes information on the Alaska Vaccine Assessment Program (AVAP). One such resource is the provider summary sheet which address frequently asked questions. For more information go

weakened immune systems.

to: http://www.epi.hss.state.ak.us/id/iz/AVAP_ProviderSummary.pdf

VAC-TRAK The VacTrAK immunization information system underwent major hardware upgrades in early January 2015. End users of the system may notice improvements in server response times, depending upon their internet connection speed. In addition, report features in the system now run more efficiently.

One important feature that we would like to highlight is the reminder/recall to notify patients about due or past due vaccinations. The Centers for Disease Control Community Guide Task Force has found this to be an effective, evidence-based strategy to improve and sustain vaccination coverage rates in children and adult populations. It can be performed in all medical settings including private, public, and tribal health.

The Alaska Immunization Program recommends immunization service providers to perform reminder/recall at least monthly to promote timely immunizations using either VacTrAK or client health record systems (manual or electronic).

VacTrAK client type users have access to the reminder/recall feature in the system. There is a VacTrAK Quick Reference Guide on basic reminder/recall available on the [VacTrAK page](#) of the Immunization Program website. Output options include: patient lists, mailing labels, letters and postcards, mail-merge content, auto-dialer content, and email reminders.

Vaccine Management

The Alaska Immunization Program, Epidemiology Vaccine Depot mailed new LogTags in January 2015 to all providers enrolled to receive state-supplied vaccine. Calibrations on the old LogTag units have expired. It is important to replace both the LogTag device and the vial with the newer ones upon receipt, if you have not done so already. Either the new or old device cradles can be used with the new LogTags.

Provider enrollment to receive state-supplied vaccine officially opened on January 21st. If your site was enrolled in 2014 and you have not yet submitted your 2015 Provider Agreement within VacTrAK, please do so before February 28th to prevent your facility from being inactivated and current vaccine stock removed.

With the implementation of AVAP and the expanded eligibility criteria of patients eligible to receive state-supplied vaccine, the Immunization Program anticipates there may be an increase in the number of vaccine orders for processing. As always, staff will strive to process orders in a timely manner. We would like to remind you to place orders before any stock level on hand reaches a critically low level. Order processing and shipping may potentially take up to three weeks once an order is placed. Timely submissions of required temperature graphs and administration data will help ensure that orders are not delayed.

One final reminder when you receive state-supplied vaccines, remember to always:

1. physically verify contents in the box with the shipping invoice, and
2. electronically note receipt of the order in VacTrAK by clicking on the arrow next to the Inbound Order within the Create/View Orders screen.

AFIX

We would like to thank all of the practices that participated in AFIX last year. Our primary focus in 2014 was on children 19 through 35 months of age.

Adventures in Pediatrics	Kodiak Island Medical Associates
Alaska Center for Pediatrics	Kodiak Public Health Center
Alaska Native Medical Center	LaTouche Pediatrics
Anchorage Neighborhood Health Center	Manillaq Association
Anchorage Pediatric Group	Mary Ann Jacob MD
Annette Island Service Unit	Mat-Su Public Health Center
Bethel Regional Public Health Center	Municipality of Anchorage
Bristol Bay Area Health Corporation	Nome Public Health Center
Capstone Family Medicine Wasilla	North Slope Borough Public Health
Central Peninsula Family Practice & Peds	Norton Sound Health Corporation
Chief Andrew Isaac Health Center	PeaceHealth Pediatric Clinic
Fairbanks Clinic	Providence Family Medical Center
Fairbanks Regional Public Health Center	Providence Matanuska Health Care
Full Spectrum Pediatrics	Ptarmigan Pediatrics
Glacier Pediatrics	SEARHC – Ethel Lund Medical Center
Homer Public Health Center	Seward Public Health Center
Juneau Public Health Center	Tanana Valley Clinic
Katy Sheridan MD	Valdez Public Health Center
Kenai Public Health Center	Valley Medical Care
Ketchikan Public Health Center	Yukon Kuskokwim Health Corporation
Kodiak Area Native Association	

Many of the participating practices chose to revise or implement new processes to improve immunization services. There is not just one strategy that offers the best outcome as many processes are often intertwined. Examples of some revised or implemented processes include: update of patient historical immunization information in VacTrAK and inactivation of patient status in VacTrAK for those who are no longer being seen at a practice. Innovations in work flow have allowed some providers the ability to assess immunization status at each and every visit in order to decrease missed opportunities.

We are happy to say that every practice can benefit from reviewing their immunization policies and procedures. Current tools and resources available can be adapted to any type of health care setting.

In 2015, we are planning to expand AFIX to include adolescents for the recommended teen platform which includes 3 doses of HPV, 1 dose of Tdap and 1 MCV vaccines.

Perinatal Hepatitis B

The Alaska Immunization Program recommends that health care providers screen all pregnant women for HBsAg. Alaska regulations require providers and laboratories to report HBsAg positive results to the Section of Epidemiology, Infectious Disease Program.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimates that there are approximately 24,000 women with chronic hepatitis B virus (HBV) infection who give birth in the United States each year, and many do not know they are infected. Up to 95% of perinatal infections can be prevented by post-exposure prophylaxis given within 12 hours of birth. Tragically, many babies exposed to HBV do not receive recommended immunization or post-exposure prophylaxis. Infants that become infected have a 90% chance of becoming chronically infected with HBV. Chronic

HBV infection in infants can lead to liver cancer, cirrhosis, and liver failure in up to 25% of infants when they become adults.

To maximally protect every newborn, the CDC, AAP, AAFP, and ACOG recommend all infants be vaccinated with a hepatitis B vaccine birth dose. Delaying hepatitis B vaccination until a follow-up doctor visit may be too late to prevent perinatal HBV transmission.

Education & Training Resources

The 2015 ACIP recommended immunization schedules are out and now available on the [Alaska Immunization Program website](#). There are both health care professional and Easy-to-read versions available. The health care professional versions include recommendations with footnotes on use of the vaccines. The Easy-to-read versions include an Alaska-specific schedule for children birth through 6 years of age.

Alaska Department of Health & Social Services
Division of Public Health
Immunization Program
3601 C Street, Suite 540
Anchorage, AK 99503
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