



**NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE**

Ashwin Vasani, MD, PhD
Commissioner

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Dear Colleague:

The New York City (NYC) Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (Health Department) would like to inform you that the initial distribution of seasonal flu vaccine for the 2024-2025 season has begun.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) continues to recommend that all people 6 months of age and older, with rare exceptions, receive an updated flu vaccine. Please vaccinate all your patients and staff, especially those at high risk for severe disease and complications from influenza, including children less than 5 years of age, people with underlying chronic medical conditions, pregnant persons, and people ≥ 65 years of age.

September and October remain the best times for most people to get vaccinated. Earlier flu vaccination—in July or August—is not recommended for most people, though there are several situations that might warrant earlier vaccination:

- Pregnant people who are in their third trimester can get an early flu vaccine to protect their babies from influenza after birth.
- Children who require two doses of flu vaccine should receive their first dose as soon as possible to allow the second dose, which should be given at least 4 weeks after the first dose, to be received no later than at the end of October.
- Early vaccination can be considered for children who have health care visits before September if there might not be another opportunity to vaccinate them.

All others, especially adults ≥ 65 years of age, and pregnant persons in their first or second trimester, should avoid early vaccination unless it won't be possible to vaccinate them in September or October.

During the past few seasons, clinical laboratories that perform testing on NYC residents reported positive influenza test results as late as May. Continue to offer vaccination for as long as influenza viruses are circulating, through spring 2025 or later.

Flu Vaccine Updates for the 2024-2025 Season

Egg-based vaccines for the upcoming influenza season contain an A/Victoria/4897/2022 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus, an A/Thailand/8/2022 (H3N2)-like virus (Updated), and a B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus. **Cell- or recombinant-based vaccines contain** an A/Wisconsin/67/2022 (H1N1)pdm09-like virus, an A/Massachusetts/18/2022 (H3N2)-like virus (Updated), and a B/Austria/1359417/2021 (B/Victoria lineage)-like virus.

All flu vaccines for the 2024-2025 season are trivalent. B/Yamagata flu viruses, which were the second B-component of the flu vaccines for the past few years, have not circulated in the population since March 2020 and so are not in this year's vaccines.

As continues to be the case, all children 6 months through 59 months of age enrolled in NYC Article 47 and 43 regulated child care, Head Start, nursery and prekindergarten programs must receive one dose of flu vaccine between July 1 and December 31 of each year. Although some children may need a second dose in order to comply with Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations, that second dose will not be required for program attendance.

Flu Vaccine Coverage

The Healthy People 2030 goal for flu vaccine is 70% for all ages. In the 2023-2024 influenza season in NYC, flu vaccine coverage with at least one dose of flu vaccine for children 6 months through 59 months of age was 61% (as of June 30, 2024), compared to 63% for the 2022-2023 season. For children 5 through 8 years of age, the rate for the 2023-2024 season was 42%, which was a 3 percentage-point drop from 2022-2023; for children 9 through 18 years of age, the rate for 2023-2024 was 40%, which was also a 3 percentage-point drop compared to 2022-2023. The rates for all three childhood cohorts during this past season were below the (overall pre-COVID) 2019-2020 rates, with the rate for children 6-59 months of age in 2023-2024 being 11 percentage-points below the 2019-2020 rate (all data from the Citywide Immunization Registry [CIR]). This downward trend of flu vaccination rates is troubling, and we urge you to help reverse this trend in the upcoming influenza season.

Among people ≥ 18 years of age, 50% reported in the 2023 Community Health Survey that they received a flu vaccine; 69% of persons ≥ 65 years of age reported that they did. Non-Latino Black individuals and Latino individuals reported significantly lower coverage (43% and 45%, respectively), and Asian/Pacific Islanders reported significantly higher coverage (60%), than non-Latino White individuals (54%).

Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program

The Health Department is now accepting VFC flu vaccine orders; all VFC orders must be placed electronically, using the [Online Registry](#). After logging into the CIR, click on the Vaccine Inventory Management (VIM) icon and select the Order Influenza tab. **Please submit an order for all the flu vaccine you will need for the entire 2024-2025 season.**

The following presentations of flu vaccine can be used for children 6 months of age or older: 0.5 mL from a multi-dose vial (only to be used in children ≥ 3 years of age, or in children 6-35 months of age if there is no other available product when the child presents) and 0.5 mL single-dose pre-filled syringes of Fluzone® (IIV3 [Sanofi]) and 0.5 mL single-dose pre-filled syringes of FluLaval® (IIV3 [GSK]). When placing your VFC order, indicate the total amount of inactivated flu vaccine needed to vaccinate all your patients 6 months through 18 years of age. Your facility may receive either of the above products, depending on availability, and they are to be considered equivalent. FluMist® (live-attenuated influenza vaccine quadrivalent [LAIV3] [AstraZeneca]) is one of the recommended flu vaccines and can be used in children 2 through 18 years of age. The ordering screens will have a separate line to indicate the total number of FluMist vaccine doses you want to receive for the 2024-2025 season. A limited amount of Flucelvax® (ccIIV3 [Seqirus]), the cell culture-based flu vaccine licensed for patients starting at 6 months of age, will also be available through the VFC program, in single-dose pre-filled syringes. Due to the limited availability, providers will not be able to order only Flucelvax, but will be required to enter a mix of standard injectable flu vaccines, as well, if they choose to include Flucelvax in their order. If you have any questions regarding ordering Flucelvax via VFC, please call (347) 396-2489.

The VFC ordering tool is designed to help ensure that all your VFC-eligible population is properly immunized against influenza. The recommended order quantity column is an estimate of the minimum number of flu vaccine doses your site will need for the 2024-2025 influenza season. Please use these recommendations as a guide when ordering your flu vaccine. It is not required that you order the recommended amount; you can order more or less. You also can adjust your order in the [Online Registry](#) during the season, as needed. Flu vaccine is not included in your practice's doses administered report (DAR) calculation, so you will not be penalized for any unused vaccine. We expect to be able to supply you with enough flu vaccine to immunize all your VFC-eligible patients; however, as in the past, you will receive partial shipments until your order is filled. The amount of and timing when vaccine will be shipped will depend on flu vaccine availability to the NYC VFC program. You will be able to track your flu vaccine shipments in the Online Registry. Please order more vaccine if you see that you are about to run out. If you need assistance with submitting your order or have questions, email nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov or call the VFC program at 347-396-2489.

Vaccine Ordering for Non-VFC Eligible Children and Adults

If you still need to order vaccine for non-VFC eligible children and adults, you should contact the vaccine manufacturers or distributors. For a list of vaccine manufacturers and distributors, visit izsummitpartners.org/ivats, which reflects flu vaccines available this season. You will need to confirm product availability directly with vaccine manufacturers and distributors. Please note that New York State Public Health Law §2112, prohibits the administration of vaccines containing more than trace amounts of thimerosal to children younger than 3 years of age and to patients who know they are pregnant (pregnancy testing is not required prior to vaccination). Be sure to order enough of the preservative-free, single-dose presentations of flu vaccine to immunize all of these patients in your practice.

In addition to the pediatric formulations listed above in the VFC Program section, non-VFC flu vaccine options for patients ≥ 3 years of age are Afluria® (Seqiris), available in 0.5 mL single-dose pre-filled syringes and multi-dose vials and, for patients ≥ 6 months of age, Fluarix® (GSK), available in 0.5 mL single-dose pre-filled syringes. An 0.25 mL dose of Afluria from a multi-dose vial may be used in patients 6-35 months of age if there is no preservative-free flu vaccine available.

If you borrow a 0.25 mL dose of Fluzone from a multi-dose vial of VFC vaccine—which would only be the case if you had no private supply for a 6-35 month-old and there was no other VFC stock of preservative-free vaccine—be sure to balance your VFC stock when you order the next time by indicating “Unaccounted for in Provider Inventory (e.g., Extra Doses or Fewer Doses in vial)” as the reason for the subtracted dose.

Starting at 18 years of age, the recombinant Flublok® (RIV3 [Sanofi]), is an option and, starting at 65 years of age, Fluzone High-Dose (HD-IIV3) and Flud® (aIIV3 [Seqirus]) may be used.

Vaccinating Children 6 Months Through 8 Years of Age

In the 2024-2025 season, the recommendation for flu vaccination of children 6 months through 8 years of age is unchanged: children in this age group who have not received two doses of flu vaccine prior to July 1, 2024, will require two doses, administered at least four weeks apart. The two previous doses do not need to have been given during the same season or consecutive seasons. If a child < 9 years of age has previously received two doses of flu vaccine, the child will need only one dose this season.

Vaccinating Adults 19 Years Through 64 Years of Age

At its June meeting, ACIP passed a unanimous motion recommending that high-dose (HD-IIV3) and adjuvanted (aIIV3) inactivated flu vaccines are acceptable options for vaccination of solid organ transplant recipients who are 18-64 years of age and are taking immunosuppressive medication (without a preference over other age-appropriate vaccines).

For current information about influenza, visit nyc.gov/flu. For questions on flu vaccine, other than those pertaining to your VFC order, call 347-396-2400 or email nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov. As always, we will send out updates throughout the season to keep you informed. We thank you for helping to protect NYC residents from influenza.

Sincerely,



Bindy Crouch, MD, MPH
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization