



MARK B HORTON, MD, MSPH
Director

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

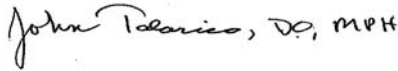


ARNOLD SCHWARZENEGGER
Governor

October 10, 2008

IZB-FY0809-03

TO: Vaccines for Children (VFC) Providers

FROM: John Talarico, D.O., M.P.H., Interim Chief 
Immunization Branch,
Division of Communicable Disease Control
Center for Infectious Diseases

SUBJECT: Recommendations for Use of Hib-containing Vaccines during the Continued
Haemophilus influenzae Type b (Hib) Vaccine Shortage

Recap of ACIP recommendations during Hib vaccine shortage

A national *Haemophilus influenzae* Type b (Hib) vaccine shortage began in late 2007. In consultation with the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), the American Academy of Family Physicians, and the American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), has recommended in most circumstances that providers, temporarily defer administering the routine Hib vaccine booster dose administered at age 12-15 months (*MMWR*, 2007. 56(50):1318-1320
<http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5650a4.htm>)

Children at high risk of Hib disease because of asplenia, sickle cell disease, immunodeficiency syndromes or who are American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) should continue to receive the age 12-15 months Hib booster dose during this vaccine shortage.

Providers should keep track of those children who did not receive the Hib booster dose so that they could be recalled later to complete the series once vaccine supplies have increased again.

Decreased California VFC allocations of single- antigen Hib vaccine

Federal VFC allocations for single antigen Hib vaccine are being significantly decreased, making it critical for providers to adhere to the CDC recommendations to defer the booster dose for children not at high risk for invasive Hib disease during the shortage.

VFC allocations for Pentacel[®] are increasing. Pentacel[®] is a combination DTaP-IPV-Hib vaccine which can be used in infants for their primary series at 2, 4, and 6 months of age during the Hib shortage. When Hib vaccine supplies are again plentiful, Pentacel[®] may also be administered as the 15-18 month booster for all children.

VFC recommendations for transitioning to Pentacel™

For those providers that have made a decision to begin use of Pentacel® in their practices our initial recommendation in August 2008 was for a gradual transition starting with 2 month olds. However, because of the increasingly limited supplies of single-antigen Hib vaccine, the California VFC program is strongly encouraging those providers that have made the decision to switch, to begin using Pentacel® for all 2, 4, and 6 month old infants. It is of critical importance that children complete their primary series in order to ensure protection against Hib. Providers who may have not yet implemented the use of combination vaccines in their practice should seriously consider doing so at this time to help ensure that their patients receive the three dose primary Hib series.

PedvaxHIB® supplies

The California VFC Program has limited supplies of PedvaxHIB® vaccine, which provides protection against Hib disease more rapidly. We have prioritized our limited supplies of PedvaxHIB® for clinics serving primarily American Indian/Alaska Native (AI/AN) children, who are at higher risk of Hib disease. These clinics should contact their VFC representative with any questions about ordering PedvaxHIB®.

VFC Orders

We expect the Hib supply to continue to be limited for the next several months. Because our allocation is limited, you may expect delays in shipments of Hib. VFC will also adjust provider orders to ensure an equitable distribution of limited vaccine supply to providers throughout the state. Providers who order both Pentacel® and ActHIB® will only receive Pentacel® as their main supply of Hib-containing vaccines until supply increases. In most cases your Hib vaccine may be shipped separately from the rest of your vaccine order.

Supplies of PedvaxHIB® for the larger population should become available again near the end of the year. When the vaccine is once again available, we expect to be able to supply you with adequate vaccine to fully immunize all your patients.

The California VFC Program will contact you when Hib vaccine is no longer in short supply and when recommendations for use of Hib vaccine are revised. Until then, we appreciate you following CDC recommendations to protect children and optimize the use of limited vaccine.

QUESTIONS?

If you have any questions, please call your VFC Field Representative or the VFC Program at: 877-243-8832 (877-2GET-VFC). You can also visit our website at www.vfcca.org.

cc: CDPH Immunization Branch Field Representatives
Local Health Officers
Local Health Department Immunization Coordinators
Local Health Department CHDP Program Directors
Vanessa Baird, Chief, Medi-Cal Managed Care Division, DHCS
Marian Dalsey, M.D., Chief, Children Medical Services Branch, DHCS
Michael Farber, M.D., Chief Medical Officer, Medi-Cal Managed Care, DHCS
Shabbir Ahmad, D.V.M., M.S., Ph.D., Acting Chief, Maternal, Child and Adolescent Health Program, CDPH
Laurie Weaver, Chief, Office of Family Planning, CDPH

Vaccine for Children (VFC) Providers

Page 3 of 3

October 10, 2008

Villita Lewis, Deputy Director, Benefits and Quality Monitoring, MRMIB

Robert Heiligman, M.D., Medi-Cal Benefits Branch, DHCS

Kathy Chance, M.D., Children Medical Services Branch, DHCS

Alan Morita, Pharm.D., Medi-Cal Pharmacy Policy Branch, CDHS