

## Get Your Practice Ready for the 2019-2020 Influenza Season

The following preparations will help get your practice ready to immunize and protect your patients against influenza.

### VFC PATIENTS ARE ENTITLED TO RECEIVE VACCINES

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program is an entitlement program, meaning your **VFC-eligible patients are entitled to receive all vaccines recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), including influenza vaccine.** ACIP recommends routine annual influenza vaccination for all persons over 6 months of age; children 6 months through 8 years of age who have not been previously immunized with two doses of influenza vaccine before July 1, 2019 need two doses of influenza vaccine this season for optimal protection. Routinely administer influenza vaccines to all your VFC-eligible patients.

It is your responsibility to vaccinate your patients as part of routine and comprehensive care services. Do not refer your VFC-eligible patients elsewhere to receive their flu vaccine. Most pharmacies do not participate in the VFC program, and referring out would mean your VFC-eligible patients would need to pay for a flu vaccine that they could have received at your practice at no cost.

### FORM YOUR INFLUENZA VACCINATION PLANS

- Identifying a practice “champion”** to support influenza vaccination efforts.
- Review the number of VFC-eligible children in your practice** to ensure all children and adolescents in your practice are protected.
- Set vaccination goals** and monitor progress throughout the season.
- Plan ahead and prepare patient lists, notifications, and scheduling.** Use the **California Immunization Registry (CAIR)** or similar **Immunization Information System** or **your clinic’s own system to remind patients and set up recall notifications for patients** needing second doses. Identify children with high-risk conditions and vaccinate them as early as possible.
- Offer flu vaccine outside of regular hours** to accommodate patients who cannot come to the clinic during the workweek.
- Prepare the office for flu clinics: engage all clinic staff, prepare systems and work flows, ensure adequate Vaccine Information Statement supplies,** and anticipate staffing needs.

### STRONGLY RECOMMEND INFLUENZA VACCINATION

- Stock patient educational resources** about influenza vaccination.
- Inform patients about flu clinics** once flu vaccine is in stock. Use every visit as an opportunity to immunize and protect patients against flu.
- Routinize flu vaccine administration.** Use a presumptive and concurrent approach and say, *“Today we will administer IPV, DTaP and Flu.”*
- [Click here](#) for resources on how to make a strong flu recommendation.



## Get Your Practice Ready for the 2019-2020 Influenza Season

### STAFF TRAINING & POLICIES

- Review all (VFC, non-VFC) influenza vaccine products that you will be administering** in your facility this year, including their dosages, age indications, and administration techniques. The [Influenza Vaccine Identification Guide](#) displays all available influenza vaccines, including formulations that are not provided by the VFC Program.
- Share the influenza resources posted on [www.eziz.org](http://www.eziz.org) with all staff.**
- Implement a yearly competency review of all staff administering any vaccine formulation, including influenza.**

### VACCINE ORDERING AND ADMINISTRATION

- Monitor your practice's influenza vaccine inventory levels weekly.**
- Continue ordering your VFC flu vaccine throughout the 2019-2020 season.** VFC Providers are expected to proactively order flu vaccine and draw down from the approved pre-book or allocated doses.
- Review VFC vaccine eligibility and tracking procedures.** All VFC-administered doses must be logged in either the [VFC Program's Flu Usage Log](#), in an Immunization Information System, or your clinic's own system. Your clinic is required to accurately account for all doses of influenza vaccines received through the VFC Program, report inventory and usage for any supplemental influenza vaccine orders, and report total influenza doses administered at the end of the season.

### VACCINE STORAGE

- Ensure your vaccine refrigerator has enough space to store your flu vaccine** in addition to other routine vaccines. Pre-designate and label areas in order to receive and readily store doses.



### VACCINE SHIPMENTS

- Be prepared to receive multiple vaccine shipments during the initial part of the influenza year.** VFC's vaccine supply arrives at McKesson in multiple shipments. Your initial order may arrive in separate shipments, as vaccine becomes available to our vaccine distributor. Initial shipments are automatically processed as supply becomes available until all initial orders are fulfilled.
- Ensure that your clinic's hours of operation are up-to-date.** Promptly report any changes to VFC by clicking the "Update Practice Information" link in your [MyVFCvaccines](#) account. Failure to do so will result in delayed vaccine delivery, may compromise vaccine shipments, and can lead to a negligent vaccine loss.
- Watch for VFC's notifications a few days prior to flu orders shipping.** VFC notifies providers a few days prior to the processing of each shipment, outlining the expected delivery timeframe and products to be shipped. Alert front office staff when vaccines are expected to arrive.
- Review proper vaccine receipt protocols with staff to prevent spoilage of vaccine shipments.** Training should include shipment inspection, verification of shipment content, proper vaccine storage, and procedures for reporting shipment issues or discrepancies to the VFC Program. See [Vaccine Receiving Log and Checklist](#) for more information.

