



# California Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program 2017-2018 Flu Order Confirmation Frequently Asked Questions

1. Can I shift doses between the various flu vaccine products this year?
  - a. Yes, you may shift between the available flu vaccine products and brands, as long as the total number of doses requested does not exceed the maximum number of doses allowed for the age group. Please keep in mind that all VFC flu products are Quadrivalent and injectable.
  - b. For the 6-35 months age group, you can shift doses from one brand to the other, but you cannot order both brands. Please note, doses that are shifted are contingent upon available vaccine supply and are not considered final until the VFC Program confirms that these requests can be accommodated.
  
2. I can shift among products in my allocation, but I can't order both brands in the 6-35 months age category. Why not?
  - a. In the 6-35 months age group, doses may be shifted from one brand to the other, but both brands cannot be ordered. This is due to the different dosage amounts in each vaccine. Only one brand may be ordered to help prevent possible administration errors.
  
3. What are the dosing amounts in each vaccine in the 6-35 months age group?
  - a. Sanofi's Pediatric Fluzone is 0.25mL and GSK's FluLaval is 0.5mL; the full dose of the entire syringe of either product should be given at the time of administration.
  - b. Children under 9 years of age with a history of <2 doses of influenza vaccine are recommended to receive 2 doses this flu season.
  - c. If you have additional questions about flu vaccine dosing, please refer to the VFC Program communication about 2017-18 Influenza Ordering Instructions or call the VFC Customer Service Center at 1-877-243-8832 for more information.
  
4. I want more flu doses - can you increase my initial order for me?
  - a. Due to supply limitations, the VFC Program cannot grant your request to increase your initial order at this time.
  - b. It is anticipated that Supplemental Flu Ordering will open earlier than previous years; you can and should order more doses as needed through Supplemental Flu Ordering.
  - c. If you have additional questions about increasing your initial flu order, please follow up with your VFC Field Representative.

5. I don't want all of the flu doses allocated to my practice - can you decrease my initial order for me?
  - a. You can decrease the number of doses in your initial order by simply reducing the amounts you request before submitting your initial order confirmation.
  
6. Why do you have an initial flu ordering system and a supplemental flu ordering system? Why can't providers order all of their flu doses at once?
  - a. An initial flu ordering system was developed as a method for providers to request an initial amount of flu vaccines to get them started for the flu season and to facilitate improved vaccine management by preventing overcrowding of the vaccine refrigerator. The exact timing and duration of flu seasons can vary, but influenza activity often begins to increase in October and typically peaks between December and February, although activity can last as late as May.
  - b. Due to the nationwide process of flu vaccine distribution to all states with VFC Programs and the timing of availability from the vaccine manufacturers, allocated flu vaccine supply to California is distributed in increments; therefore the CA VFC Program cannot distribute a practice's entire flu vaccine request for the season all at once.
  - c. The supplemental flu ordering system was developed to encourage providers to proactively request flu vaccine doses more frequently, as needed, throughout the season; this also helps to reduce the burden for the practice to store a large supply of flu vaccine at any given time in the vaccine refrigerator.
  
7. How were my allocations calculated?
  - a. The number of doses available for your practice's initial flu order is based on your reported vaccine usage for key sentinel vaccines, total doses ordered for the previous flu season and available vaccine supply.
  
8. How were my products allocated?
  - a. Doses allocated to each Provider are based on brand preferences in other pediatric vaccines, as well as flu products shipped to your practice during the previous flu season.
  - b. Allocations are also based on available vaccine supply pre-booked for distribution to California VFC Providers.
  
9. Why are the total doses I received last year less than the numbers I see in my initial flu order?

- a. This is just your initial flu vaccine order and is intended to get your practice started for the upcoming flu season; it is expected that the remainder of doses your practice may need will be ordered proactively through supplemental ordering.
- b. Keep in mind that this year's flu doses were allocated based on your reported vaccine usage for key sentinel pediatric and adolescent vaccines, total doses ordered for the previous flu season and available vaccine supply.

10. What if I need more doses?

- a. It is expected that your practice will order additional doses proactively as needed in Supplemental Flu ordering, which is anticipated to open earlier this year than in previous flu seasons, depending on available vaccine supply.
- b. It is recommended that you look at your flu vaccine on-hand inventory when you are placing your routine order for other VFC vaccines; place supplemental flu orders at the same time as your routine VFC vaccine order and be sure to request all flu products that are needed,
- c. If flu vaccine doses requested are in significant excess of what is used for other routine pediatric vaccines, then a justification for these additional flu doses must be submitted to the VFC Program.

11. I'm a New Provider, why don't I have doses allocated for my initial order?

- a. New Providers that have reported usage data for key sentinel vaccines were allocated doses accordingly, but New Providers without reported usage were not allocated doses and will be evaluated on a case by case basis. Please call the VFC Customer Service Center at 1-877-243-8832 for more information on submitting a flu vaccine request; please note these requests will be assessed individually and based on available vaccine supply.
- b. If your request is approved or a modified request is approved, your practice will see these amounts in your flu order form when you log-in to your MyVFCvaccines account and click on the flu order button.
- c. Newly enrolled providers with limited or no vaccine usage data may contact the VFC Customer Service Center or their VFC Field Representative to discuss their flu requests.

12. Why do we have different products than last year?

- a. California pre-booked flu products based on available vaccine supply for distribution to VFC providers.
- b. Fluarix is not available for ordering through the VFC Program this year, as a different GSK product, FluLaval, is available through VFC.

- c. For more information about the available flu products this year, please refer to the VFC Program communication regarding 2017-18 Influenza Ordering Instructions.
- d. Your practice should also refer to the official VFC Program Influenza Letter and Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) 2017-18 flu recommendations when they are available.

13. Why is FluMist still not available this year?

- a. FluMist Quadrivalent is still an FDA-licensed product. However, the ACIP recommended that FluMist Quadrivalent not be used for the 2017-2018 season. Therefore, FluMist will not be offered through the VFC Program.
  - i. ACIP comprises medical and public health experts. The ACIP meets three times a year to develop recommendations on how to use vaccines to control disease in the United States. The recommendations include the age(s) when the vaccines should be given, the number of doses needed, and the amount of time between doses.

14. I'm an existing provider and ordered flu last year – why don't I have doses for this year?

- a. Providers without reported vaccine usage for the key sentinel vaccines which this year's flu allocations were based on were not allocated 2017-18 flu doses.
- b. Ordering ONLY flu vaccines is not in compliance with VFC Program requirements. Providers enrolled in the VFC Program agree to provide all ACIP recommended vaccines for the VFC-eligible populations they serve.
- c. Please follow up with your VFC Field Representative to discuss your vaccine ordering history and current flu allocation.