



NEW YORK CITY DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH AND MENTAL HYGIENE

Dave A. Chokshi, MD, MSc

Commissioner

September 24, 2021

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc
Assistant Commissioner
Bureau of Immunization

42-09 28th Street, CN21
Queens, NY 11101-4132

Dear Colleague:

This is an update on influenza activity and the availability and distribution of seasonal flu vaccine. Influenza activity is currently low in the U.S. Vaccine manufacturers have projected they would provide as many as 188 million to 200 million doses of flu vaccine nationally for use during the 2021-2022 season. Flu vaccination should be well underway at your facility.

In New York City (NYC), we have been allocated almost 50% of the total amount of flu vaccine that we pre-booked for the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program, and 73% of this vaccine has been shipped to facilities. Facilities will receive partial shipments until their orders has been completely shipped. All products are in good supply.

As of September 23, 2021, only 73% of VFC providers have ordered flu vaccine. All VFC providers are expected to offer flu vaccine to their patients. VFC providers who have not yet ordered flu vaccine should do so immediately. If you need help with your VFC flu order, please call (347) 396-2489. Please do not allow your facility to run out of vaccine; if you need vaccine, contact us before your inventory gets too low.

While it's not possible to say with certainty what will happen in the fall and winter, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) believes it's likely that influenza viruses and the virus that causes COVID-19 will both be circulating at that time. Relaxed COVID-19 mitigation measures (such as stay-at-home orders and mask mandates) may result in an increase in influenza activity during the upcoming 2021–2022 flu season, compared with the 2020-2021 season. Common respiratory viruses, such as respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), did not spread as much as usual during the 2020-2021 flu season as in past seasons. However, data from the National Respiratory and Enteric Surveillance System showed an increase in these viruses' activity during the summer, outside of their usual seasonal increases.

COVID-19 vaccine and the flu vaccine can be administered at the same visit. If your patients have not received their recommended COVID-19 vaccine, they should get it as soon as possible; the flu vaccine should ideally be received by the end of October.

As has been the case for the past few years, all children six months through 59 months of age enrolled in NYC Article 47 & 43 regulated pre-kindergarten programs (Child Care, Head Start, Nursery or Pre-K) must receive one dose of flu vaccine between July 1st and December 31st 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 is not required for school attendance.

For questions on flu vaccine, other than those pertaining to your VFC order, please call (347) 396-2400 or email nycimmunize@health.nyc.gov. We thank you for your continuing efforts at protecting NYC residents from influenza.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads 'Jane R. Zucker'.

Jane R. Zucker, MD, MSc