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Subject: COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendation Expanded to Children 6 months through 4 Years of Age, June 19, 2022



DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC HEALTH

Subject: COVID-19 Vaccine Recommendation Expanded to Children 6 months through 4 Years of Age

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This communication is being sent to all key contacts at provider organizations administering COVID-19 vaccine— please read this message in its entirety. Please feel free to share it with others in your organization who may benefit from the update. Note that all our communications are archived on our [web site](#).

Dear Connecticut COVID-19 Vaccine Providers,

A few days ago the [Food & Drug Administration \(FDA\) expanded the authorized emergency use for Moderna and Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine to include children down to 6 months of age](#). Subsequently the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) met this weekend to issue the below recommendation; meeting and presentation materials are available [here](#). CDC Director Dr. Rochelle Walensky accepted those recommendations and released a [statement](#). Lastly, Connecticut's Public Health Commissioner Dr. Manisha Juthani issued a [statement](#) to Connecticut residents.

CDC now recommends that all children 6 months through 5 years of age should receive either the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine to better protect them from COVID-19. All children, including children who have already had COVID-19, should get vaccinated.

[Interim Clinical Considerations](#) for healthcare providers have been updated and [associated materials](#) will be updated shortly. It is expected that a [COCA call](#) reviewing the new recommendation and clinical considerations will be scheduled for this week. Key messages from CDC are attached to this communication.

Summary table of new COVID-19 products and recommendations:

Vaccine:	Moderna (magenta border)	Pfizer (maroon cap)
Age	6 months – 5 years	6 months – 4 years
Preparation	No Diluent	Dilute Before Use
Amount of Diluent Needed per Vial	No Diluent	2.2 mL

Dose Volume/Dose	0.25mL/25mcg	0.2 mL/3mcg
Doses per Vial	10 doses per vial	10 doses per vial (after dilution)
Primary Series Schedule		
(for people who are NOT moderately or severely immunocompromised)		
Number of Doses	Two (25mcg) doses	Three (3mcg) doses
Interval between 1 st and 2 nd Dose	4-8 weeks	3-8 weeks
Interval between 2 nd and 3 rd Dose	Not Authorized	At least 8 weeks
Storage Conditions		
ULT Freezer (-90°C to -60°C)	DO NOT STORE	9 months
Freezer (-25°C to -15°C)	Through expiration date	DO NOT STORE
Refrigerator (2°C to 8°C)	30 days	10 weeks
Room Temperature (8°C to 25°C)	24 hours prior to first puncture	12 hours prior to first puncture
After First Puncture (2°C to 25°C)	Discard after 12 hours	Discard after 12 hours

COVID-19 vaccine providers in Connecticut may begin administration of doses in line with the FDA emergency use authorization and CDC recommendations as soon the vaccine arrives.

Distribution of the new pediatric vaccinations for these younger children has started, and providers who placed a preorder will receive vaccine this week. Providers can now begin ordering young pediatric vaccine using the standard weekly ordering practice through the [submissions portal](#).

Provider Call to Action

Multiple studies have indicated that parents and guardians of children in this age group prefer to be vaccinated at their provider office. **That is why we are asking that all providers who see young pediatric patients carry COVID-19 vaccine in their offices, continue to make a strong provider recommendation, and have conversations with parents and patients to increase vaccine confidence.** Here are some things you can do to support vaccination in our state:

- Providers should message all parents/guardians of children 6 months – 4 years. This messaging should include:
 - A strong provider recommendation; resources can be found [here](#).
 - Whether your office is planning to administer COVID-19 vaccine for this new age group.
 - If you aren't planning on administering COVID-19 vaccine, information on where your patients can go to receive vaccine. Parents can be referred to [gov](#) or to a [DPH yellow van clinic](#). Additionally, providers may also host a DPH yellow van clinic at their office location by completing an [intake form](#). Please note, even if you do not plan on providing COVID-19 vaccine in your office, this does not preclude you from making a strong recommendation!
- Please make sure your clinic listings remain up to date on [gov](#), and if you accept “all comers”, that you are listed as a public site so that your clinic is searchable on the site by the public.
- If you are able, please increase your capacity to provide vaccines, by hosting additional clinics, engaging vaccinators, etc., and reach out to the Immunization Program if there's anything we can do to help!

Addressing Provider Challenges

CT DPH surveyed CoVP providers on anticipated challenges to vaccinate this younger age group. These are some strategies and resources the providers can use overcome these challenges.

- Providers can prepare to address **parental hesitation** by staying current on vaccine facts and safety data [here](#) and sharing talking points with clinic staff. Additionally, providers should make a strong personal recommendation to parents/patients.
- If **staff availability** and **physical space at the clinic locations** is a challenge your clinic faces, then you can incorporate COVID-19 vaccine administration in normal clinic operations. Keep vaccine in your office and provide it to scheduled patients as they come into the office throughout the summer. Many parents want to get their child vaccinated at their provider office or after they have spoken to the provider so don't let it become a missed opportunity!
- Look at **staff training** [resources](#) for training materials and modules on COVID-19 vaccines, vaccine administration, vaccine storage and handling.
- There are great [resources](#) to address **patient/parent education**— templated letter, factsheets, posters, social media graphics and videos.

- The **15-min post-vaccination observation period** should not be a challenge for regular vaccine providers since it is an [ACIP best practice](#) for children/adolescents.
- Providers with **wastage concerns** should not let it be a barrier to providing vaccine to their patients. While we encourage all providers to minimize vaccine wastage, it is inevitable due to the manufacturer's vaccine packaging, which is why providers are not penalized for wastage (i.e., unused doses from a multi-dose vial). Providers are just required to report any wastage for tracking purposes.

Thank you for all your ongoing work and support of our COVID-19 vaccine roll-out in Connecticut.

For the CT DPH Immunization Program, visit: [Contact Us](#)

For the COVID-19 webpage, visit: [COVID-19 Vaccine Program](#)

If you would like to unsubscribe from these communications, please send an email to Dph.immunizations@ct.gov with the subject line "Unsubscribe from COVID-19 Program communications".