

**PLEASE COPY THIS FOR ALL HEALTH CARE PROVIDERS
IN YOUR PRACTICE**

The primary purpose of this communication is to notify you that Rotavirus vaccine can now be ordered for vaccination of your VFC population and that Tdap vaccine can now be ordered for vaccination of any adolescent in your care (regardless of insurance status), not just for VFC-eligible adolescents.

Rotavirus Vaccine

Rotavirus is a leading cause of severe acute gastroenteritis in infants and children with an estimated 2.7 million episodes occurring in the U.S. each year resulting in approximately 70,000 hospitalizations among children under five years. In February 2006, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved a live, oral, pentavalent Rotavirus vaccine for the prevention of rotavirus gastroenteritis in infants and children. The vaccine is manufactured by Merck & Co. and is marketed under the brand name RotaTeq. The vaccine is an oral preparation to be administered as a 3 doses series at 2, 4, and 6 months of age. The first dose of the series should not be administered before 6 weeks of age and the last dose should not be given after 32 weeks of age, as there is insufficient data on safety and efficacy outside of these age ranges. There should be at least 4 weeks spacing between doses. Thus, if a child misses all or part of the initial series, catch-up vaccination with doses given after a child is 32 weeks old is not recommended at this time.

The vaccine must be kept refrigerated between 35 and 46 degrees Fahrenheit. A Vaccine Information Statement (VIS) dated 4/12/06 was previously faxed out to all providers on May 2, 2006 and must be given to the parent or legal guardian before each dose of the vaccine is administered.

Beginning July 1, 2006 you can begin to order Rotavirus vaccine for all 6-32 week old VFC-eligible children in your practice.

Tdap Vaccine

The Immunization Program began providing Tdap vaccine for VFC-eligible children 11-18 years of age in January of this year. The Tdap product supplied by the Immunizations Program is Boostrix, manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline. Boostrix is licensed only for use in 10-18 year

Update: Rotavirus and Tdap vaccine availability, May 30, 2006

olds. The recently passed state budget contains additional monies to expand Tdap vaccination to all adolescents regardless of insurance status.

Beginning July 1, 2006 you can begin to order Tdap vaccine for all 11-18 year old patients in your practice.

Tdap vaccine should be routinely administered to all 11-12 year old patients in place of the previously recommended Td booster, as well as to adolescents 13-18 years of age who have already received Td vaccine provided that a 5 year interval since receiving Td has elapsed. That interval can be shortened if the need for protection from pertussis outweighs the risk of possible severe reaction to the vaccine.

We are enclosing an updated listing of vaccines provided through the Immunization Program as of July 2006. You will also be receiving a six month supply of Vaccine Order Forms (VOF's) in a separate mailing in the coming weeks. The updated forms contain space to order rotavirus vaccine. Upon receiving the new VOF's, please discard any old versions of the form. As a reminder, all VOF's must be received by the Immunization Program by the 1st business day of each month.

As always if you have any questions, please call the Immunization Program at (860) 509-7929.