

# IMMU-NEWS

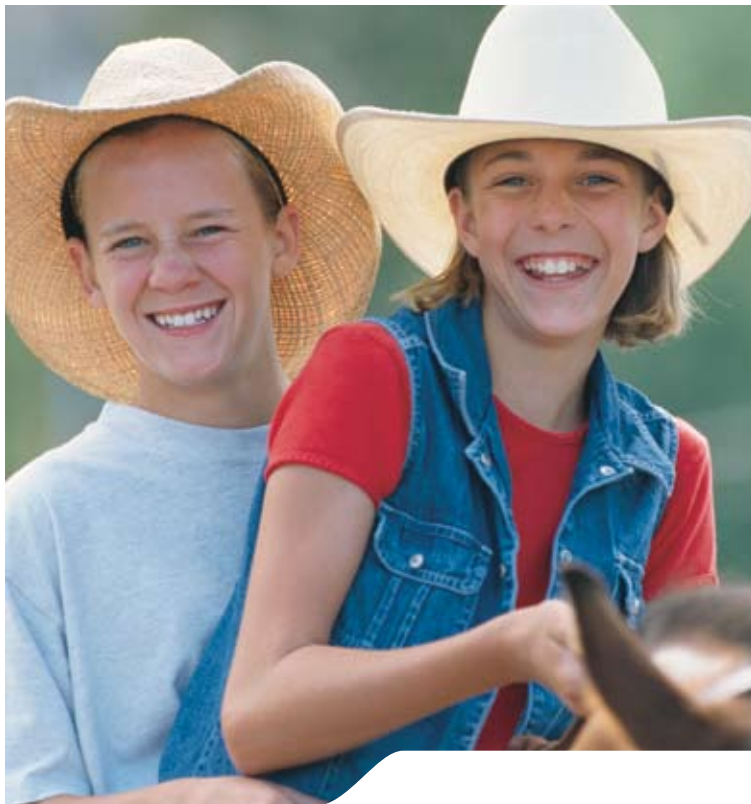
## Fall 2009

IMMU-NEWS is a publication of the Florida Department of Health, Division of Disease Control, Bureau of Immunization.

4052 Bald Cypress Way, Bin A-11, Tallahassee, FL 32399-1719  
(850) 245-4342, Fax (850) 922-4195

[Immunization@doh.state.fl.us](mailto:Immunization@doh.state.fl.us), [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org)

Editorial Staff: John Keegan, Marlo Peck, Celeste O. Phillips, Laura Rutledge, Linda Zeigler



Flu activity usually peaks in February or March in Florida, so vaccinations in December and January offer protection during the peak of the season.

To encourage vaccination throughout the season, the Bureau of Immunization is working with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) to promote the week of December 6-12, 2009, as National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW). This event is designed to highlight the importance of continuing flu vaccination through the months of December, January, and beyond.

Educational and promotional materials for use during the flu season can be downloaded and printed from these sites:

- [www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/nivw/)
- [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/flu/](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/flu/)
- [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/)

I urge you to be active in the public health of your communities by promoting flu vaccinations. Visit [www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/misconceptions.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/misconceptions.htm) for information to spread the word about flu vaccine (and not the disease).

By now, Floridians are striving to protect themselves from seasonal flu, as well as the circulating novel H1N1 influenza virus. The Department of Health and the Bureau of Immunization have made every effort to facilitate availability of

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**Bureau of  
Immunization**

Immunizing Florida. Protecting Health.

## MESSAGE FROM THE BUREAU CHIEF

**CHARLES H. ALEXANDER**

Autumn has arrived—bringing cooler mornings and evenings, a return to school, football, bonfires, and Thanksgiving gatherings. It is a relaxing time to reminisce about the joys of summer. Autumn weather also ushers in the influenza (flu) season. Historically, this results in flurries of activity as Floridians rush to get their flu shots. Many operate under the misconception that vaccination against flu must occur before December to be effective. Nothing could be further from the truth.

The protection from immunizing against flu lasts well into the following spring, and vaccination is recommended throughout the season, even after the disease is present in the community.

**I GOT MY  
FLU VACCINE.  
HAVE YOU?**

**GET VACCINATED.**

[cdc.gov/flu](http://cdc.gov/flu)



### In this Issue:

- Florida ranks 7th in 2008 National Immunization Survey for coverage among children 19 through 35 months of age
- Preteen Vaccine Week
- Hiberix® Approval
- Seasonal Influenza

## Vaccinate BEFORE They Graduate!

Do you have teen patients who will be graduating from high school this year? If so, here are a few suggestions to ensure they receive all of the recommended vaccines while they are still in school:

- Use a reminder and recall system to bring teen patients back to their medical home.
- Review their immunization records at every visit.

- Remind them that proof of immunization is often required by colleges and employers, or for traveling abroad.
- Point out the considerable cost savings of getting vaccinated while still covered under their parents' insurance plan or through the Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program.

The complete schedule of recommended vaccines can be found on the CDC's website at [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules).

## Preteen Vaccine Week 2010

Preteen Vaccine Week is January 17-23, 2010. This is an opportunity to alert families of your 11- and 12-year-old patients that they should schedule a preteen doctor visit and get protection from some serious vaccine-preventable diseases.



The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that 11- and 12-year-olds receive the following immunizations:

- **Meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4)** to protect against certain types of invasive meningococcal disease, a serious illness that can cause meningitis.
- **Tetanus booster (Tdap)** to protect against tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis (whooping cough).
- **Human papillomavirus (HPV)** three-dose series for girls to prevent cervical cancer in

adulthood. HPV vaccine is also recommended for young women between 13 and 26 years of age who haven't been previously vaccinated or haven't completed the three-dose series. Girls as young as 9 can receive the vaccine.

- **Two doses of varicella vaccine** for all children over 4 years of age who have not had the disease.
- **Two influenza vaccines:** the regular seasonal influenza vaccine and the novel H1N1 influenza vaccine. The ACIP emphasizes that influenza vaccine should be offered throughout the influenza season.

The CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the Society for Adolescent Medicine recommend that all 11- and 12-year-olds get a preteen check-up. During the childhood years, the number of healthcare visits decline dramatically, so the preteen visit is key to a healthy start for adolescents. It's also the perfect opportunity to discuss other preventive measures, such as eating right, staying active, and handling peer pressure.

## I do not have health insurance for my child. Who do I call?

Florida KidCare is the state's children's health insurance program for uninsured children under age 19. It includes 4 different parts, or programs: MediKids, Healthy Kids, Children's Medical Services and Medicaid. When you apply for the insurance, Florida KidCare will check which

program your child may be eligible for based on age and family income.

To apply for Florida KidCare, call (888) 540-5437, apply online, or print an application and instructions. For more information visit [www.floridakidcare.org](http://www.floridakidcare.org).

Fl  rida KidCare



## Catheryn Mellinger, Community Health Nursing Consultant, Retires



We offer best wishes and congratulations on Cathy Mellinger's recent retirement from the Bureau of Immunization. Her career with the Florida Department of Health spanned 28 years, the last nine years in the bureau.

"Cathy has a wealth of immunization knowledge she shared with staff and clients throughout the state. All of us will miss her greatly," said Charles H. Alexander, Chief, Bureau of Immunization.

Born in Cochranville, Pennsylvania, Cathy worked in several Florida cities, Northeastern states, and on an Indian Reservation in the Great Southwest. She earned her licensed practical nurse certificate in her home state and registered nurse degree

from St. Petersburg Community College, a bachelor of science in Health Education from Florida State University, and an American Nursing Certification as a Community Health Nurse.

Cathy's nursing career encompassed patient care in private and state hospitals, veterans hospitals, nursing homes, and the Pasco and Gadsden county health departments (CHD).

As a Community Health Nursing Consultant with the bureau, she visited nearly every CHD where she conducted quality improvement site reviews. Since 2004, she has served as the "Go-To" person for vaccine-preventable diseases, and in the past few years she also coordinated the state Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program. The Division of Disease Control selected her as this year's *Together We Can Award* winner for improving communication and linkages between bureaus.

## Mohammed Mobin A. H. Sardar Appointed Area Immunization Consultant



Congratulations to Mohammed Mobin A. H. Sardar, who was recently appointed as the Bureau of Immunization's consultant in the area 6 field office, which serves Citrus, Hernando, Pasco, Pinellas, and Sumter counties. He joined the bureau in May 2003, where he held the position of Area Immunization Analyst.

"Mohammed brings a good understanding about the immunization process from his 6 years with the area 6 field office," said Charles H. Alexander, Chief, Bureau of Immunization. "We

look forward to working with him in his new position."

A native of Bangladesh, Mohammed began his career in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, as an accountant. When he moved to Florida in 1998, he worked as a Research Associate prior to joining the bureau.

Mohammed earned a bachelor's degree in Management in Bangladesh, and a bachelor of science in Business Management and a master's degree in Business Administration from the University of Phoenix.

He continues to provide public health monitoring of both public and private immunization partners in the 5-county area.



**H1N1 Swine Flu**  
[www.MyFluSafety.com](http://www.MyFluSafety.com) 1-877-352-3581



## Coalition of Hillsborough County Wins Award

The Back-to-School Coalition of Hillsborough County has been in existence for six years. Chaired by the Hillsborough County Health Department's Immunization Program manager,



the coalition includes all major immunization partners in the county, including Tampa General, South Florida Baptist, St. Joseph's, and University Community hospitals, Hillsborough County Public Schools, United Healthcare, Amerigroup, Kiwanis, and other community-based organizations.

Immunizations and physical exams required for school attendance have been provided free to thousands of students by the coalition's efforts.

On October 13, 2009, the impact of this Coalition's efforts were recognized by the University of South Florida's Area Community Civic Association. At the 20th Annual Awards Banquet, Lieutenant Governor Jeff Kottcamp presented the Association's "Community Appreciation Award" for outstanding support of community programs, events, and activities in the University Area Community.

Congratulations to the Coalition!

## Accelerated Approval of Hiberix®

### Vaccine Approved as a Hib Booster Dose

Before the availability of *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) vaccines, Hib disease was the leading cause of bacterial meningitis among children under 5 years of age in the U.S. Meningitis is an infection of the tissue covering the brain and spinal cord, which can lead to lasting brain damage and deafness. Hib disease can also cause pneumonia, severe swelling in the throat, infections of the blood, joints, bones, and tissue covering of the heart, as well as death. Hib disease is spread through the air by coughing and sneezing.

A nationwide shortage of Hib vaccine began in December 2007 due to a voluntary recall by a manufacturer and subsequent production suspension of 2 of 4 vaccines licensed in the U.S. for primary and booster immunization against invasive disease due to Hib.

This shortage resulted in a recommendation by the CDC to temporarily defer the Hib vaccine booster dose for children who were not at high

risk for infection, until the vaccine supply could be restored. This deferral was in effect from December 18, 2007, through June 25, 2009.

The Food and Drug Administration (FDA) approved Hiberix®, a Hib vaccine, as a booster dose for children 15 months through 4 years of age. Hiberix® is manufactured by GlaxoSmithKline.

The CDC recommends providers begin recalling children in need of the booster dose when feasible and monovalent Hib vaccine supply in the office is adequate. The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program will make every effort to accommodate your request, given the availability of the vaccine.





## Florida Ranks 7th in 2008 National Immunization Survey

The Bureau of Immunization is pleased to announce the publication of *National, State, and Local Area Vaccination Coverage Among Children Aged 19--35 Months --- United States, 2008* in *MMWR Weekly August 28, 2009 / 58(33);921-926*. The report can be found online at [www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5833a3.htm?s\\_cid=mm5833a3\\_e](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5833a3.htm?s_cid=mm5833a3_e).

Each year, the CDC performs the National Immunization Survey (NIS), which estimates immunization coverage among children 19 through 35 months of age, born during January 2005 through June 2007, for 50 states and selected local areas. Healthy People 2010 established vaccination coverage targets of 90% for individual vaccines and 80% for the series in the 4:3:1:3:3:1 vaccine series:

- 4 diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis (whooping cough) (DTaP)
- 3 inactivated polio (IPV)
- 1 measles-mumps-rubella (MMR)
- 3 *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- 3 hepatitis B (HepB)
- 1 varicella (chickenpox)

This report describes the 2008 NIS coverage estimates for this series and individual vaccines, 7-valent pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV7),

more than 2 doses of hepatitis A vaccine (HepA), and HepB birth dose vaccination received in the first 3 days of life. Nationally, in 2008, 4:3:1:3:3:1 series coverage was 76.1%, compared with 77.4% in 2007. Greater than 90% coverage was maintained for all recommended series vaccines, except for the number of children receiving the 4th dose of DTaP vaccine by 12 to 18 months of age. The Bureau is addressing this challenge in children and adults with our *4 Sure: Get the 4th DTaP* campaign, and a series of Tdap brochures available at our publications website at [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/brochures.htm#Tdap](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/brochures.htm#Tdap).

The 2008 NIS results indicate that the 4:3:1:3:3:1 coverage rate among children 19 through 35 months of age in Florida is 79.9% ( $\pm 4.8$ ). When compared to all other states and the District of Columbia, Florida ranks 7th in the nation for coverage among children 19 through 35 months of age.

The results from the 2008 NIS demonstrate that the nation's immunization program remained successful in maintaining high vaccination rates among young children. However, with approximately 12,000 children born every day in the U.S., each requiring protection from vaccine-preventable diseases, continued attention is needed to meet Healthy People 2010 vaccination coverage levels and improve coverage in select groups with lower vaccination coverage.

## Ask the Experts

From the Immunization Action Coalition newsletter, *Needle Tips*.

*Will H1N1 influenza vaccine be available for healthy people age 25 years and older (who are not in targeted groups)?*

Once public health authorities at the local level determine that the H1N1 influenza vaccine demand for the 5 target groups has been met, providers will be notified that they can administer the vaccine to healthy people ages 25 through 64

years. Once demand for H1N1 influenza vaccine among younger age groups is met, vaccination should be expanded to all people age 65 and older.

*If a patient has received the seasonal influenza vaccine, do they need to receive the H1N1 influenza vaccine?*

If a patient is in a risk group to receive H1N1 influenza vaccine, they should be vaccinated. Studies suggest that vaccination with seasonal influenza vaccine will not provide protection against the 2009 H1N1 influenza virus.



## Where to Get the Latest Updates on Novel H1N1 Influenza Virus

Since information about the novel H1N1 influenza virus is constantly changing, this issue of IMMU-NEWS will not attempt to inform readers about the status of the H1N1 pandemic. The CDC has established extensive H1N1 web resources for healthcare professionals and the public, and updates this information regularly. Some websites that are particularly helpful include:

- CDC's main H1N1 webpage: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)
- Latest information from CDC: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/whatsnew.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/whatsnew.htm)
- Guidance for clinicians: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/guidance)

- General information for the public: [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general\\_info.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu/general_info.htm)
- Subscribe to CDC's email updates: [www.cdc.gov/emailupdates/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/emailupdates/index.html)

In addition, the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) has developed an H1N1 information webpage at [www.immunize.org/h1n1](http://www.immunize.org/h1n1). The IAC selects from CDC website content, journal articles, partner resources, and news articles, to present H1N1 influenza information that may have special relevance.

You can find H1N1 information specific to Florida at the Department of Health's website at [www.MyFluSafety.com](http://www.MyFluSafety.com).



H1N1 influenza social media tools for consumers and partners are available at [www.cdc.gov/SocialMedia/Campaigns/H1N1/](http://www.cdc.gov/SocialMedia/Campaigns/H1N1/)

## Keep Vaccinating Against Seasonal Influenza!

If you're wondering if you should continue to vaccinate against seasonal influenza (flu) once novel H1N1 influenza vaccine became available, the answer is YES! The novel H1N1 influenza vaccine will not protect people against seasonal flu, and seasonal flu vaccine will not protect against novel H1N1 influenza.

Unfortunately, some healthcare facilities are having difficulty finding available seasonal flu vaccine to purchase. Be assured that, though seasonal flu vaccine may be in temporary short supply in some settings, supplies are expected to catch up to demand soon.

Many resources regarding influenza disease and vaccination are available to healthcare professionals and the public. Following is a list of resources:

### U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

- [www.flu.gov](http://www.flu.gov)

### National Influenza Vaccine Summit

- [www.preventinfluenza.org](http://www.preventinfluenza.org)

### Seasonal Flu

- [www.cdc.gov/flu](http://www.cdc.gov/flu)
- [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/flu/](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/flu/)
- [www.immunize.org/influenza](http://www.immunize.org/influenza)

### Novel H1N1 Influenza

- [www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu](http://www.cdc.gov/h1n1flu)
- [www.MyFluSafety.com](http://www.MyFluSafety.com)
- [www.immunize.org/h1n1](http://www.immunize.org/h1n1)

### Educational Resources

- [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/)
- [www.immunize.org/printmaterials/dis\\_inf.asp](http://www.immunize.org/printmaterials/dis_inf.asp)
- [www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/](http://www.cdc.gov/flu/freeresources/)

## Teen Immunization Materials

### Adolescent Shots

This 3-panel brochure lists the recommended vaccines for adolescents. It includes the ACIP recommended immunization schedule for this age group.

### Keep Students and Classrooms Healthy

This 18x24-inch poster, targeted for parents, recommends scheduling a "preteen" healthcare visit and provides information regarding recommended immunizations and their importance.

### Vaccinate Before You Graduate

This flyer encourages teens preparing for graduation to take charge of their health and make sure their vaccinations are up-to-date before graduating from high school.

These brochures, and many more, are currently available as Adobe Acrobat PDFs on our website at [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/).

If you are interested in commercial printing of these documents, please contact Marlo Peck at (850) 245-4444, extension 2382, to request print-ready PDFs.

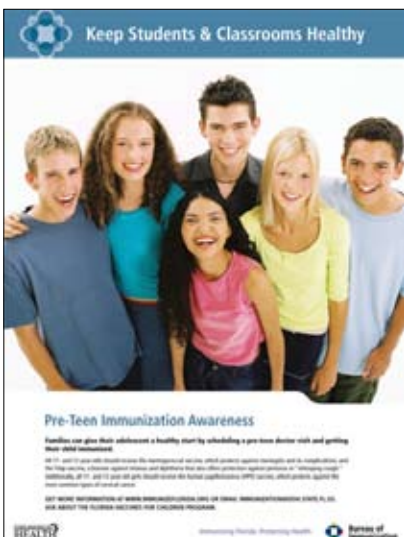
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the vaccine and to educate everyone about the seriousness of influenza. Be cautious and smart—get vaccinated, wash your hands, and keep them away from eyes, nose, and mouth, cough into your sleeve, and stay home if you are sick. Be sure to visit [www.MyFluSafety.com/](http://www.MyFluSafety.com/) for flu updates and information.



I care about **YOU.**

To find a flu shot, call your healthcare provider, pharmacy, or local county health department. You can also locate public health-sponsored novel H1N1 influenza vaccine clinics scheduled in your county by visiting [www.myflusafety.com/myfluclinic.htm](http://www.myflusafety.com/myfluclinic.htm).



IMMU-NEWS is available online at [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/newsletter/](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/newsletter/). If you would like to be added to the Bureau of Immunization's mailing list and receive IMMU-NEWS and other bureau announcements, visit our mailing list registration page at [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/newsletter/subscribe.htm](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/newsletter/subscribe.htm).



## New Immunization Materials

### The Florida Vaccines for Children Program, Benefits and Eligibility

Aimed at healthcare providers, this 4-panel brochure provides information about the Vaccines for Children Program. Topics covered include a program description, vaccine eligibility, who can participate, participation guidelines, benefits of the program, and how to enroll.

### The Florida Vaccines for Children Program, Preventing Fraud and Abuse

This flyer defines fraud as it applies to the Vaccines for Children Program and gives information for reporting fraud and abuse.

### Fight the Flu

This 11x17-inch poster lists 5 important steps to avoid contracting or spreading the flu.

## Don't Miss Opportunities to Vaccinate!

This 4-flyer series explains the importance of screening for immunizations at every healthcare visit. Two flyers are aimed at healthcare providers and parents, listing common invalid contraindications to vaccination. Two flyers are aimed at young adults and seniors to encourage screening for immunizations at every appointment.

These publications, and many more, are available as Adobe Acrobat PDFs on our website at [www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/](http://www.ImmunizeFlorida.org/publications/).

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