

Immunization Updates

New In Vermont: Vaccines For Adults Program

In the fall of 2007, the Vermont Department of Health began to offer Tdap and PPV 23 vaccine to providers of adult immunizations as the first step in the new Vaccines for Adults (VFA) program. The goal of the VFA program is to offer all adult Vermonters access to the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) routinely recommended vaccinations. Enrollment in VFA began in Bennington County and has expanded across the state. Currently, any practice that is already receiving vaccine from the Health Department can enroll in the VFA program.

As of December 1st, there are 51 practices statewide that are enrolled in VFA. Starting in January 2008 any practice that would like to offer Tdap or PPV 23 to their adult population is welcome to enroll. Enrollment requires completing a VFA enrollment form in which the practice agrees to follow ACIP guidelines for immunizations, follow CDC recommendations for vaccine storage and handling, and adhere to Vermont Department of Health guidelines for immunization documentation and inventory management systems. In the coming months the VFA program hopes to expand education around Tdap vaccinations by targeting postpartum women, and to address zoster vaccine in Vermont

For more information on the VFA program or to receive an enrollment form contact:

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Direct Shipment of Vaccines Delayed until June of 2008

The Vermont Immunization Program was scheduled to begin direct distribution to provider practices in January of 2008. The date for implementation of this vaccine distribution system has been moved forward to June of 2008 in order to work out system issues on a national level.

This national initiative is being launched by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) with the goal of improving efficiency and saving program costs. The challenge for VT providers will be anticipating vaccine needs with adequate lead time for ordering, processing, shipping and delivery. The CDC and VT Immunization Program will work with providers to determine order schedules specific to your site based on historic volume of vaccine used, ordering patterns, and refrigerator capacity. **Information on how to place a vaccine order will be coming this spring.**

Continued on back....

Contents

- **Adult Immunization Program**
- **Direct Shipment Delayed**
- **Varicella Delays**
- **Pre-teen vaccines**
- **Meningococcal Vaccine Clarification**

Varicella Vaccine Delays Improving

Due to production issues on a national level, there has been a lag time between order and vaccine delivery in the range of 6-8 weeks. The delays have decreased in December and delivery appears back on schedule taking the normal 1 – 2 weeks. Merck has informed us that the combined MMRV vaccine will not be in production for 2008, but may be back in early 2009. We apologize for the inconvenience.

CDC Recommends Pre-teen Vaccinations

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommends the following vaccines at 11-12 years: Tdap, meningococcal conjugate vaccine (more on this vaccine below), and human papillomavirus vaccine for girls. Adolescents (and adults) should be assessed for vaccine status and caught up at the next opportunity. In August of 2007 the CDC began their pre-teen vaccine campaign. This campaign is designed to promote the 11-12 year old check-up, increase immunization coverage rates and decrease health disparities. Campaign materials such as posters, flyers, etc can be found at www.cdc.gov/vaccines. Click on “special populations” and on pre-teen and adolescents. This recommendation may help decrease the number of cases of pertussis disease in adolescents, as vaccine boosters given at 11-12 years of age help to boost waning immunity. Also, of note, immunogenicity studies on recipients of HPV vaccine demonstrate that girls aged 9-15 show a greater immune response than do girls aged 16-26.

MCV 4 (Menactra®) and MPSV 4 (Menomune®) Information

- In 2007 meningococcal vaccination was recommended for all adolescents 11-18, noting that highest risk group is college freshman who live in dormitories
- This month the ACIP recommended the use of MCV4 for children 2 – 10 years of age who are at increased risk for meningococcal disease, e.g. persons residing or traveling in areas in which the disease is epidemic, individuals with autoimmune disorders, and those who are without a functioning spleen
- Individuals who last received MPSV 4 more than 3 years ago and remain at risk for infection should receive a dose of MCV 4
- Individuals with a history of Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS) might be at increased risk for GBS after MCV4 vaccination. For children with a history of GBS, MPSV 4 is an alternative for short – term protection for that lasts 3 – 5 years.
- VDH supplies MCV 4 that can be used to vaccinate all persons 11 – 18 years of age, college students living in dorms (excludes out-of-state students who attend school in Vermont), and those 2 – 10 years who are at increased risk for meningococcal disease.

MCV 4 - Menactra®	MPSV - Menomune®
Both vaccines protect against serotypes A,C, Y and W-135	
Conjugate Vaccine	Polysaccharide Vaccine
Licensed for age 2 - 55	Licensed for age 2 and older
Licensed since 2005	Licensed since 1978
Administered intramuscularly	Administered subcutaneously
No revaccination needed	Revaccination with MCV4 after 3 years if at risk

Remember:

Due to production issues please defer the 12 – 15 month dose of Hib vaccine until further notice. Thank you!