

IMMUNIZATION Update

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Question of the Week

Is it too late to receive my flu shot and COVID-19 booster?



No, it is not too late!

LDH is encouraging residents to take precautions ahead of the holiday gatherings

With COVID-19 cases on the rise and flu at its highest level in five years, the Louisiana Department of Health reminds residents to make sure they and their loved ones are up to date on their vaccines and boosters ahead of holiday gatherings.

The updated COVID-19 boosters are formulated to offer continued protection against the original strain, while also offering new protection against two lineages of the Omicron variant, BA.4 and BA.5.

Everyone six months of age and older should get their flu shot. It is safe and convenient to get your COVID-19 vaccine/booster and flu vaccine at the same time.

Resources:

- Find out when to get a COVID-19 booster with [CDC's COVID-19 booster tool](#)
- Visit idh.la.gov/covidtesting or call 211 to find a test site near you.
- Home testing kits are also widely available for people with insurance coverage, [free of charge.](#)
- Find locations [to receive the flu shot.](#)

This week is National Influenza Vaccination Week



From **December 5–9, 2022**, we will observe National Influenza Vaccination Week (NIVW), reminding everyone six months and older that there's still time to get a flu vaccine. Included below are resources, vaccination messages and activities from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) that you can use to share essential flu information with your networks.

- **[Social Media Content:](#)** Use the CDC's suggested Twitter, Facebook, Instagram and LinkedIn copy to spread the word. Schedule content to remind your networks about the importance of flu vaccination throughout the week. Use #FightFlu to join the conversation all week, and tag us at @CDCFlu on Twitter!
- **[Shareable Assets:](#)** Share why you get an annual flu vaccine and encourage others to do the same with customizable photo frames and social story templates.
- **[Template Matte Release](#)**
- **[Sample Newsletter Blurb:](#)** Include our sample copy in your email newsletter or other communications to let others know about NIVW and its upcoming activities.
- **[Patient Reminder Messages:](#)** Remind patients at your practice to get their annual flu vaccine by sharing these messages through your patient portal or other reminders.
- **[Printable Poster & Flyer](#)**

We hope you will join us this year as we encourage everyone—especially children and others at higher risk—to protect themselves and their loved ones from the flu this season by getting a flu vaccine.

28th Annual Louisiana Shots for Tots State Conference

Earlier this week, the Louisiana Department of Health Immunization Program joined the Shots for Tots Coalition in hosting the annual Shots for Tots conference. The event, held at the Roosevelt Hotel in New Orleans, focused on children's vaccinations and strategies to improve Louisiana's rates. Currently, in Louisiana, most childhood vaccination percentages are lower than the national average. The most recent percentages of childhood vaccinations are listed below:

- Combined 7-series vaccinations at 24 months of age are **61.9%** compared to **71.3%** nationwide as of 2020.
- Seasonal flu dose vaccinations at 5–12 years of age are **50.3%** compared to **58.4%** nationwide as of 2022.
- Seasonal flu dose vaccinations at 6 months–4 years of age are **62%** compared to **66.7%** nationwide as of 2022.
- DTaP vaccination—four or more doses at 24 months—are **74.4%** compared to **82.3%** nationwide as of 2020.
- PCV vaccination—four or more doses at 24 months—are **78.6%** compared to **83.8%** nationwide as of 2020.



Doris Brown, Assistant Secretary Office of Public Health at the Department of Health and Hospitals, discusses Moving Forward: Louisiana LDH budget.



The conference was attended by over 250 healthcare workers, including physicians, nurses, school nurses, pharmacists and pharmacy techs from all over Louisiana, eager to learn and discuss the state of childhood vaccinations. The meeting dove into vaccination statistics, vaccination barriers, and strategies to increase vaccinations within Louisiana.

Presentations from Dr. Joseph Bocchini, MD, and Dr. John Vanchiere, MD, urged providers to check their patients' vaccination records and remind parents to vaccinate their children. In comparison, speakers Petera Reine Diaban, MPH, and Dr. Vincent Covello, PhD, stressed the importance of effective communication, marketing and partnerships when disseminating vaccination messaging.



Dr. Vincent Covello presents on effective high-stress communication.



Javone Davis, Interim Immunization Program Director, opens the Shots for Tots conference with Immunization Program updates.

For 28 years, the Shots for Tots conference has served as a space for healthcare workers on the frontline to build networks and share ideas on how to vaccinate priority communities in Louisiana.

Week 47 FluView report

Flu activity continues to increase across the country, with the highest in the southeast and south-central parts of the country, followed by the Mid-Atlantic and the south-central West Coast regions. Click below for key points summarizing FluView data and other relevant flu-related information.

In Louisiana during Week 47:

- 10.34% of patient visits reported through the U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet) were due to influenza-like illness (ILI).
- This percentage is above the regional baseline of 3.9%.
- The ILI case definition changed starting with the 2021–2022 season: fever >100.3 AND cough and/or sore throat.

Cumulative 2022-23 influenza vaccinations statewide:

1. Flu vaccines given to individuals 0–17 years of age: 111,066
2. Flu vaccines given to individuals 18+ years of age: 558,297

[FluView Report Week 47](#)

Vax Matters podcast: Children & the COVID-19 vaccine



Be immune from misinformation with the Office of Public Health's Vax Matters podcast. Listen to the experts discuss all things vaccine, from smallpox to COVID-19.

Even though we hear about vaccines daily, what do we know about them? The Vax Matters podcast provides listeners with the truths behind immunization from all angles.

Episode 33 (November 30, 2022) of Vax Matters delves into the details of the COVID-19 booster, addressing concerns and questions from across the board. Dr. Jennifer Avegno, director of the New Orleans Health Department, is the guest on this segment that covers the subject comprehensively. Episodes are available on most major podcast platforms. Click here to listen now: [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), [Amazon](#), [Audible](#).

If you would like to be a future guest on the Vax Matter podcast, contact jourdan.barnes@la.gov

Pfizer direct minimum order quantity change

On Thursday, December 1, 2022, the minimum order quantity (MOQ) for multi-dose vial Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 monovalent and bivalent vaccines **changed from 300 to 180 doses**.

Please note that Pfizer/McKesson may send out a monovalent product that expires in less than 30 days.

Monkeypox (MPV) is now mpox

The [World Health Organization](#), at the urging of the Biden administration, has changed the name of the monkeypox virus to mpox. Not only was the name monkeypox imprecise—rodents, not monkeys, are probably the primary reservoir for the virus—but critics contended that the term was hurting efforts to destigmatize the disease.

Public Health Communication Collaborative (PHCC) resources: The flu

As cases of the flu, RSV and COVID-19 rise, many people have questions about the best way to stay safe and healthy this holiday season. To support your continued year-end communication efforts and help your communities gather safely—whether virtually or in person—here are some of PHCC's recent resources to promote COVID-19 and flu safety:

- Communicate about this year's severe [flu season and flu prevention](#)
- Help your community understand when to test for COVID-19 and [how to use at-home COVID-19 tests correctly](#)
- Amplify the safety and efficacy of [updated COVID-19 booster doses](#)
- Underscore the latest [COVID-19 vaccine recommendations for children](#)

Reaching Gen Z: Engaging young audiences in public health

ASTHO will host a virtual conversation on effective communication strategies for rebuilding trust in public health and engaging Gen Z as public health advocates. This webinar, set for Monday, December 12, will detail the importance of public health messaging, social media, outreach and engagement and data; provide tips and advice for creating new or updating existing crisis communications plans; and share information on tools and resources to assist public health leaders and health communicators in combating misinformation and disinformation.

[Click here](#) to register.

December holiday ordering and delivering schedule

Holiday vaccine ordering cadence

Planning for vaccine delivery in December and early January is vital. Carrier holiday volume is very high. It is best to submit orders early in the month to ensure orders are not disrupted by limited delivery periods.

HOLIDAY CALENDARS

December 22-29 delivery schedule

	Thursday Dec 22	Friday Dec 23	Saturday Dec 24	Sunday Dec 25	Monday Dec 26	Tuesday Dec 27	Wednesday Dec 28	Thursday Dec 29
Pfizer	Normal Deliveries	<i>Deliveries upon request only</i>	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	Normal Deliveries	Normal Deliveries	Normal Deliveries
McKesson Specialty	<i>Deliveries upon request only</i>	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	Normal Deliveries	Normal Deliveries	Normal Deliveries

December 30 - January 4 delivery schedule

	Friday Dec 30	Saturday Dec 31	Sunday Jan 1	Monday Jan 2	Tuesday Jan 3	Wednesday Jan 4
Pfizer	<i>Deliveries upon request only</i>	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	Normal Deliveries	Normal Deliveries
McKesson Specialty	<i>Deliveries upon request only</i>	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	No Deliveries	Normal Deliveries

National Public Health Information Coalition (NPHIC): RSV surge raises questions about repeat cases

As respiratory syncytial virus, otherwise known as RSV, continues to surge across the U.S., experts warn it's possible people can be infected with it more than once. A second infection is unlikely to occur immediately after a recent episode.

RSV can infect someone more than once in the same season, especially immunocompromised children and older adults, experts say.

"Weekly rates of RSV hospitalizations are far higher than they have been for the previous four seasons, exceeding the peak weekly rates in all pediatric age groups since pediatric data started being collected in RSV-NET in October 2018," a spokesperson for CDC told Fox News Digital. Read more from FOX News [here](#).

Improving the vaccination experience: Accessible vaccination for neurodiverse people at any age

People with Autism and other developmental disabilities have lower childhood immunization rates than their peers without Autism, leaving them vulnerable to many

vaccine-preventable diseases. The vaccination visit can be especially traumatic and stressful for these families. Effective strategies exist to reduce pain and anxiety for these families during the vaccination visit.

Join immunize.org and experts from the Autism Society on December 13 at 1 pm (ET) for a free, live, 1-hour webinar, Improving the Vaccination Experience: Accessible Vaccination for Neurodiverse People at Any Age. In this webinar we will learn more about the Autism Society's practical tips to improve vaccine confidence by providing a calm and pleasant vaccination visit.

[Click here](#) to sign up for the webinar.