

IMMUNIZATION Update

January 5, 2023 | Issue 92



Question of the Week

How do I find my immunization records?



Happy New Year! 'Tis the season for black-eyed peas, cabbage and New Year's resolutions. By now, most people have committed to going to the gym, eating healthy or adopting other healthy practices. In addition to those resolutions, Louisiana's Immunization Program would like to encourage people to add "update my immunizations" to their lists.

We encourage providers to remind their patients about MyIR online vaccine records and ask patients to sign up for this easy way to keep up with their family's immunizations.

- Sign up for MyIR Mobile [here](#) to view your immunization records anywhere.
- Request a copy of your Immunization records from your doctor.
- [View the Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule.](#)
- [View the Adult Immunization Schedule.](#)
- [Download LA Wallet to view your COVID-19 vaccinations.](#)

COVID omicron XBB.1.5 variant on the rise



According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), COVID omicron XBB.1.5 nearly doubled prevalence over the past few weeks and represents about 41% of new cases in the United States. As the holiday season comes to a brief pause before Mardi Gras season, health officials are urging individuals who still need to receive their bivalent booster to do so now.

The COVID omicron XBB.1.5 variant is highly immune-evasive. It appears to bind better to cells than other earlier omicron variants, which could result in a surge in breakthrough cases and re-infections.

[Watch the video here.](#)

Healthcare providers should be on the lookout for strep A infections in children

The CDC issued a health alert recently notifying clinicians of a rise in invasive group A streptococcal (iGAS) infections in kids. While the overall number of cases has remained relatively low, and these infections remain rare in children, the agency is investigating reports from Colorado and other states.

The uptick in cases has coincided with the more prevalent respiratory syncytial virus (RSV), influenza viruses, SARS-CoV-2 and other respiratory viruses. Additionally,

there has been a sharper increase in illnesses due to group A strep in Europe and the U.K., where it's been showing up as scarlet fever. Providers are reminded there is a shortage of amoxicillin to treat infections. Read more from CDC [here](#).

Week 51 FluView report

Seasonal influenza activity remains high but is declining in most areas. The highest levels are 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 51:

- 5.1% 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: **129,229**
2. Flu vaccines given to individuals 18+ years of age: **610,361**

[FluView Report Week 51](#)



Vax Matters podcast: Shingles



Be immune from misinformation with the Office of Public Health's Vax Matters podcast.

A familiar voice returns on this episode – Dr. Frank Welch! Dr. Welch took us through the history of vaccines early on in this series and now lends his experience and knowledge to us again as we discuss the shingles virus and the vaccine developed to defend against it.

All Vax Matters 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

Assessment of the impact of social media on the health and well-being of adolescents and children

Social media often plays a significant role in the everyday lives of American youth. At its [first meeting](#) this month, a National Academies' committee will review research potentially linking social and digital media to various physical and mental health outcomes among adolescents and children. The multi-day discussions will also explore strategies that can be used to understand better and address this complex relationship.

An [agenda](#) is available for the most up-to-date information on the event webpage.

1. January 5, 2023 | 2:00 PM – 3:00 PM CST
2. January 6, 2023 | 11:00 AM – 3:00 PM CST
3. January 9, 2023 | 12:00 PM – 4:00 PM CST

[Register here.](#)



Upcoming SHVS webinar: Omnibus Unwinding Provisions and Implications for States, Wednesday, January 11

State Health and Value Strategies (SHVS) is hosting a webinar during which experts from Manatt Health and GMMB will provide an overview of the unwinding provisions in the legislation, building on our recent expert perspective, [*Unwinding Provisions in the 2023 Consolidated Appropriations Act*](#). Presenters will discuss open questions and key considerations for state policymakers as they head into the final stretch of planning for the transition back to regular eligibility and enrollment operations. The webinar will also include a question and answer session during which webinar participants can pose their questions to the experts on the line.

Omnibus Unwinding Provisions and Implications for States

Wednesday, January 11 at 1:00 PM CST

Registration (required) at the following link:

https://princeton.zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dXWK1JENRduNHLik0AVZig

To request accommodations for this event due to a disability, contact Stephanie Benjamin (stephanie.benjamin@princeton.edu) at least 48 hours in advance. Also, please share the registration information with other interested state colleagues.

At-home COVID test available for free again this winter



The Biden administration is making rapid COVID tests available for free again this winter through a limited round of ordering. Households can now order four rapid COVID tests for free at [CovidTests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov). Orders started shipping in December near the Christmas holiday, and deliveries will continue in January, according to the White House. The free at-home test program relaunch is part of the Biden administration's preparedness plan for COVID this winter. COVID infections are increasing again as hospital emergency departments are already battling a surge of patients sick with the flu and RSV. See more from CNBC [here](#).