

HEALTH UPDATE



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

REGION IV PUBLIC HEALTH

Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, Wahkiakum
counties and Cowlitz Tribe

TO: Physicians and other Healthcare Providers

Please distribute a copy of this information to each provider in your organization.

Questions regarding this information may be directed to the following Region IV health officers:

Alan Melnick, MD, MPH, CPH
Clark County Public Health, (360) 397-8412

Sarah D. Present MD, MPH
Skamania County Community Health, (509) 427-3850
Wahkiakum County Health & Human Services, (360) 795-6207

Jennifer Vines, MD, MPH
Cowlitz County Health & Human Services, (360) 414-5599

Alert categories:
Health Alert: conveys the highest level of importance; warrants immediate action or attention.
Health Advisory: provides important information for a specific incident or situation; may not require immediate action.
Health Update: provides updated information regarding an incident or situation; no immediate action necessary.

**HEALTH
UPDATE**
August 11, 2016

Reminder to administer influenza and Tdap immunizations to your pregnant patients



Attached: Letter from Washington State Department of Health

Please see the attached letter from the state Department of Health, reminding providers about two very important immunizations, **influenza and Tdap**, recommended to protect the health of pregnant women and infants by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists.

Thank you for your partnership.

To subscribe or unsubscribe from this listserv, email: Tippy.Hartford@clark.wa.gov



DOH 348-572 July 2016

August 1, 2016

Dear Provider,

Two immunizations to protect the health of women and infants are recommended for pregnant women by the American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists: **influenza and Tdap**.^{1 2}

Pregnant women are more prone to severe illness, hospitalization, and even death from flu. Pregnant women with flu also have a greater chance of miscarriage, and premature labor and delivery. Receiving a flu vaccine as early as possible during pregnancy reduces these risks. Flu shots have been given safely to millions of pregnant women over many years.

Pertussis outbreaks occur regularly in Washington, with infants at highest risk of severe illness, hospitalization, and death. Tdap is recommended for women between 27 and 36 weeks in each pregnancy. This prevents mothers from transmitting pertussis to their infants, and their infants receive passive immunization that protects them during the vulnerable first weeks of life.

You can help to protect women and babies by routinely recommending and administering these immunizations. Studies confirm that your recommendation and offer of vaccines are essential!

Engage Your Office Staff:

- ✓ Develop a pro-immunization culture, including all office staff.
- ✓ Designate an immunization coordinator and establish a reminder system for vaccinations.
- ✓ Immunize staff members to prevent disease transmission.
- ✓ Issue standing orders for vaccinations. You can bill an administration code.

Educate Your Patients:

- ✓ Make a strong recommendation for needed vaccines and provide them on site.
- ✓ If you don't administer vaccines, provide a referral and *follow up with patients to ensure that they receive all recommended vaccines.*
- ✓ Discuss and document declinations and revisit the vaccine decision at subsequent appointments.

¹ Integrating immunizations into practice. Committee Opinion No. 661. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Obstet Gynecol 2016; 127; e104-7. Available at: www.acog.org/Resources-And-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Gynecologic-Practice/Integrating-Immunizations-Into-Practice

² ACOG Influenza Vaccination during Pregnancy. Committee Opinion No. 608. American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists. Obstet Gynecol 2014; 116:1006-7. Available at: www.acog.org/Resources-And-Publications/Committee-Opinions/Committee-on-Obstetric-Practice/Influenza-Vaccination-During-Pregnancy

Use the [Washington State Immunization Information System](#) (IIS) or make sure your EMR sends immunization data to the IIS:

- ✓ Check each patient's immunization status to avoid missed opportunities.
- ✓ Document all administered vaccines.

Thank you for promoting these lifesaving immunizations to your patients. For more information, check our Department of Health webpages on [influenza](#) and [pertussis](#).

Sincerely,

Scott Lindquist
Communicable Disease Epidemiologist
Washington State Department of Health

For people with disabilities, this document is available on request in other formats. To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).