



Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

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Paula F. Nickelson
Director

Michael L. Parson
Governor

Dear Colleague,

September 16, 2024

We are now starting the fall respiratory virus season for 2024-2025. In the past several years, we have seen tremendous challenges and dynamic changes in how our state and nation can optimize our response to the emergence of new respiratory pathogens and variants. As you know, prevention of respiratory illness via vaccination remains a cornerstone of the mitigation of the impact of respiratory viruses on the health of our patients, communities, schools, economy, and healthcare systems.

Vaccination guidance from the CDC and ACIP continues to change as new vaccines are approved, and our understanding of these new vaccines continues to evolve. Included below are abbreviated current guidelines for RSV, COVID-19, and Influenza vaccinations, as well as special comments on logistical concerns regarding RSV vaccination in Missouri. I am asking for your partnership to ensure that as many Missourians as possible are protected this respiratory virus season.

RSV:

- **In Missouri, pharmacists cannot give the RSV vaccine without a prescription from a healthcare provider.**¹ When recommending RSV vaccination to patients, please be sure to send a prescription to the appropriate pharmacy to ensure this vaccine will be dispensed and administered.
- **For Older Adults**
 - In June 2024, the [CDC ACIP just updated their guidance on the RSV vaccine for older adults and removed the language which recommended shared decision making](#). Vaccine is now recommended for:
 - All adults ages 75 and older
 - Adults ages 60-74 with [conditions that predispose to severe RSV illness](#)
- **For Pregnant Women and Infants** the CDC RSV Immunization Guidelines remain unchanged.
 - **RSV antibody (nirsevimab)** is strongly recommended **for all newborns** (not just NICU patients) during RSV season to be **administered before hospital discharge** if the mother did not receive the RSV vaccine during pregnancy. Or eligible infants can be immunized as an outpatient as soon as possible. Unlike last year, **no limitations in supply are anticipated this season**.

COVID-19:

- [The CDC recommends](#) everyone age 6 months and older receive the updated 2024-2025 COVID-19 vaccine. If needed, MO local public health agencies and pharmacists may give this without a prescription.

Influenza:

- [The CDC recommends](#) everyone age 6 months and older receive the updated 2024-2025 influenza vaccine. If needed, MO local public health agencies and pharmacists may provide this without a prescription.

A directory of all CDC ACIP guidelines can be found here: https://www.cdc.gov/acip-recs/hcp/vaccine-specific/?CDC_AAref_Val=https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/index.html

Thank you for partnering with us to mitigate the effects of respiratory viruses this season.

Best Regards,

Heidi B. Miller, MD

Chief Medical Officer, Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services

¹ <https://revisor.mo.gov/main/OneSection.aspx?section=338.010&bid=53860&hl=pharmacist%u2044vaccine>

PROMOTING HEALTH AND SAFETY

The Missouri Department of Health and Senior Services' vision is optimal health and safety for all Missourians, in all communities, for life.