



# VENTURA COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH

Protecting Health - Promoting Wellness



## Monthly Immunization Update

November 2024

Greetings Ventura County Schools and Partners,

This newsletter is meant to keep you updated on issues related to vaccines quickly and easily and maintain our connection with all of you. We welcome your questions and comments. Please feel free to share this newsletter with your colleagues. Thank you!

### *Prevent Seasonal Flu*

The best way to reduce your risk from seasonal flu and its potentially serious complications is to get a flu vaccine every year. This page has resources to help answer your questions about flu vaccines.



- CDC recommends a yearly flu vaccine as the first and most important action in reducing your risk of flu and its potentially serious outcomes.
- Flu vaccines help to reduce the burden of flu illnesses, hospitalizations and deaths on the health care system each year. (Read more about [flu vaccine benefits](#).)
- Flu vaccination also has been shown to reduce the severity of illness in people who get vaccinated but still get sick.

For 2024-2025, all flu vaccines will be designed to protect against three influenza viruses (Visit [Vaccine Virus Selection](#) for this season's vaccine composition.)

- Everyone 6 months and older should get an annual flu vaccine, ideally by the end of October but people should continue to get vaccinated as long as flu viruses pose a threat to their community.
- Vaccination of people at higher risk of developing serious flu complications is especially important to decrease their risk of severe flu illness.

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People at higher risk of serious flu complications include [young children](#), [pregnant people](#), people with certain chronic health conditions like [asthma](#), [diabetes](#) or [heart](#) and lung disease, and [people 65 years and older](#).

Vaccination also is important for [health care workers](#) and other people who live with or care for people at higher risk of serious flu illness to keep from spreading flu to them. This is especially true for people who work in long-term care facilities, which are home to many of the people most vulnerable to flu.

Children younger than 6 months are at higher risk of serious flu illness but are too young to be vaccinated. People who care for infants should be vaccinated instead.

# Addressing Vaccination Anxiety for Children

Fear of needles and vaccine visits is common in older children. What you do and say can help children experience less pain and help parents and children more readily accept recommended vaccinations. Below are strategies that can improve the vaccination experience, especially when combined. Consider what is practical. Simply acknowledging the feelings of both child and caregiver and letting them know you care can help.

## **Before the Visit**

Pre-registration may minimize time in the waiting room where anxiety can mount.

Establish expectations. If possible, let families know the child will be offered any needed vaccinations and that you'll work with them to make the experience comfortable.

Have the caregiver bring a favorite comfort item or "fidget item" from home (e.g., spinner, game).

Set up the vaccination room/area so it's comfortable and private. Keep needles out of sight until necessary. Consider topical analgesia (e.g., 5% lidocaine cream, spray, or patch).

This may help with pain but needs to be applied to the vaccination site 30 to 60 minutes ahead of time. With guidance, some families may accomplish this before arriving.



## ***Updates & Reminders!***

- **Ventura County Public Health's Immunization Program will be hosting free Flu Pod events open to the public on the following dates:**
  - **Saturday, November 2nd, 8:00am - 2:00pm at Ventura College**  
**4667 Telegraph Rd. Ventura, CA 93003**

Ventura County Public Health Immunization Program

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We are on the web!

<https://vchca.org/immunization-program>

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