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Vaccine Referral

A Series on Standards for Adult Immunization Practice



Even if your practice doesn't stock all or any vaccines, you still have a critical role to play in ensuring your patients are protected from serious diseases.

Routinely assess your patients' immunization needs, vaccinate with vaccines you do stock, and provide referrals for recommended vaccines you do not stock.

Here's why it's important:

- **Each year, thousands of adults in the United States suffer illness, are hospitalized, or even die from diseases that could be prevented by vaccines.**

Adults believe immunization is important, but most don't know which vaccines they need throughout their lives.

- **Patients rely on you to give them the best advice on how to protect their health.**

If you don't tell them about the vaccines they need, your patients are unlikely to get vaccinated.

Here's what you can do:

- **Refer your patients to other immunization providers for vaccines you don't stock.**

It may not be possible to stock all vaccines in your practice. But you can still ensure that your patients are getting the vaccines they need by following up your strong recommendation with a referral. There is an expanding network of immunization providers, and it is easier than ever to find providers in your area who offer vaccination services. See back for details.

- **Confirm that patients received recommended vaccines by following up at the next visit.**

Document the vaccines your patients receive, whether you administer them or not, to make sure patients are fully immunized. Simple reminders can help your practice and your patients stay up to date.

U.S. vaccination rates for adults are extremely low.

For example:

- Only 20% of adults 19 years or older have received Tdap vaccination.
- Only 28% of adults 60 years or older have received zoster (shingles) vaccination.
- Only 20% of adults 19 to 64 years old, at high risk, have received pneumococcal vaccination.
- Only 44% of adults 18 years or older had received flu vaccination during the 2014–2015 flu season.

Sources: NHIS 2014 (MMWR 2016; 64(4)), BRFSS 2014–2015 (www.cdc.gov/flu/fluview)

For resources and tips on vaccine assessment, recommendation, administration, and documentation, visit:

www.cdc.gov/vaccines/adultstandards

**DON'T WAIT.
VACCINATE!**



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention

Vaccine Referral Options

- **HealthMap Vaccine Finder** (<http://vaccine.healthmap.org>) is a free, online service where users can search by zip code for providers who offer vaccines.
- **Health Departments** often provide routine vaccinations or can help you identify other local vaccine providers. Visit www.vaccines.gov/getting/where/ and click on your state to learn more.
- **Pharmacies** are a convenient location for many patients to get vaccinated. Most pharmacies have on-site clinics that provide vaccines.
- **Travel Clinics** are current with vaccine recommendations for international travel and often carry vaccines that are less frequently recommended and might be cost-prohibitive to stock. Find travel clinics in your area: <http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/page/find-clinic>

Remind patients to check with their insurance plans regarding which providers their insurance includes for vaccine services.

When referring, consider giving your patients a vaccine prescription. If your patients can leave your office with a prescription for the vaccines you recommend it may help them to take the next step.

Vaccine prescription pads, customizable with your provider information, are available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults/downloads/vaccine-rx-pad.pdf>

**For more information and resources on adult immunization,
visit: www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/adults**