



April 6, 2020

Well-Child Visits During COVID-19 Pandemic

As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to affect our communities, maintaining well-child visits and childhood immunizations during this period is important. It may not seem feasible due to the current impact of COVID-19 community transmission, staffing, and parental concerns. However, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) have issued the following recommendations for prioritizing well-child visits and childhood immunizations during this pandemic period, as well as strategies that can be implemented across pediatric practices to slow the spread of disease.

PRIORITIZING WELL-CHILD VISITS AND IMMUNIZATIONS OF YOUNG CHILDREN

We understand due to community circumstances related to COVID-19, some providers may not be able to provide well-child visits, including administering immunizations. Please refer to the following recommendations:

1. If a practice can provide only limited well-child visits, healthcare providers are encouraged to prioritize newborn care and vaccinations of infants (through 24 months of age) when possible.
2. Schedule well-child visits in the morning and sick visits in the afternoon, as well as separate patient waiting areas by assigning sick visits in a different area of the clinic or another location than well-child visits.
3. Reschedule well-child visits for middle childhood and adolescents to a later date. Keep a list of rescheduled appointments to facilitate patient recall later on.

Important Note: Local Health Departments immunization clinics may be impacted due to response to the COVID-19 activities. Please check with your Local Health Department before referring members.

TEMPORARY RELOCATION OF VACCINE FOR CHILDREN (VFC) PARTICIPATING LOCATION

In order to support practices with the implementation strategies to prioritize immunizations of young children, the VFC program will expedite the enrollment of temporary alternative sites, as well as grant approval of the relation of immunization services for an enrolled location. Guidance can be found at <https://eziz.org/vfc/enrollment/>.

REFER TO CDC AND AAP FOR FURTHER GUIDANCE:

- AAP: <https://services.aap.org/en/pages/covid-19-clinical-guidance-q-a/>
- CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/healthcare-facilities/index.html>.