



# Provider Notice

October 2023

## **Vaccines: COVID-19, RSV & Influenza**

### **COVID-19**

COVID-19 is caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus and is spread by droplets containing the virus. Symptoms of COVID-19 include fever, cough, and respiratory symptoms. The most effective method to prevent the spread of COVID-19 is with the vaccine.

The U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA) has approved updated COVID-19 vaccines for 2023-2024. These vaccines are Comirnaty, manufactured by Pfizer Inc., and Spikevax, manufactured by ModernaTX Inc. These vaccines target the Omicron variant XBB.1.5 that is currently circulating. Per U.S. Center for Disease Control guidelines, individuals  $\geq 5$ yo are eligible to receive one dose of either vaccine regardless of previous vaccination. Individuals that are 6 months – 4 years of age or immunocompromised may be eligible for up to 3 doses of either vaccine depending on vaccination status and the number of previous doses received. Individuals that are moderately or severely immunocompromised may receive additional vaccine doses based on the clinical judgement of their provider.

Vaccines should be given at least 2 months apart. For individuals with mild to moderate disease at high risk for progression to severe disease, outpatient treatments are available. Paxlovid and Lagevrio are oral 5-day treatments, while Veklury is an intravenous 3-day treatment administered at a healthcare facility.

### **Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV)**

Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) is a contagious virus that causes respiratory infections, commonly found in children under the age of 2 years. It can be transmitted through large droplets and secretions from contact with an infected person. A few examples of symptoms include the following: congested or runny nose, fever, sore throat, sneezing, headache.

To prevent infection with RSV, it is recommended to regularly wash hands with soap and water, disinfect any potential surfaces, and avoid close contacts with those suspected to be infected. In addition, monoclonal antibodies are also available for infants and children up to 2 years of age. The monoclonal antibodies are available for prevention of RS, examples include Synagis and Beyfortus for a select group of infants and children. If infected, treatment for RSV includes mainly symptomatic control and proper hydration.

### **Influenza**

Flu is a contagious respiratory illness caused by influenza viruses that infect the nose, throat, and sometimes the lungs, which can affect people at any age. Flu viruses spread mainly by tiny droplets made when people with flu, cough, sneeze, or talk. It can cause mild to severe illness, and at times can lead to death. Examples of flu symptoms include the following: fever, chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, fatigue (tiredness), and some people may have vomiting and diarrhea, though this is more common in children than adults.

The most effective method to prevent flu is to get a flu vaccine each year. Flu vaccine is available to all persons, 6 months or older. Flu vaccines for the 2023-'24 season have been updated to include a new influenza A (H1N1) pdm09 component. The influenza A (H3N2), influenza B Yamagata lineage and influenza B Victoria lineage components remain the same.

To prevent flu, it is also recommended to regularly wash hands with soap and water, disinfect any potentially contaminated surfaces, and avoid close contacts with those suspected to be infected. If infected, treatment for flu includes flu antiviral drugs such as Tamiflu (oral tablet), Relenza (inhaler), and Raptivab (IV infusion). Antiviral drugs and medicines can be used to treat flu illness and ease flu symptoms, such as pain and fever.

#### References

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