

## NEW MEXICO HEALTH ALERT NETWORK (HAN)

### ADVISORY

## New Mexico Department of Health Provides Updated Guidance on Influenza Vaccination and Antiviral Treatment for 2022-2023 Flu Season

September 14, 2022

### Summary

The New Mexico Department of Health (NMDOH) encourages providers to prepare for the upcoming 2022-2023 influenza season. For the first time, the CDC Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends that adults aged  $\geq 65$  years preferentially receive any one of the following higher dose or adjuvanted influenza vaccines: quadrivalent high-dose inactivated influenza vaccine (HD-IIV4), quadrivalent recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4), or quadrivalent adjuvanted inactivated influenza vaccine (aIIV4). We are still seeing many cases of COVID-19, and expect to see more cases of influenza and other seasonal respiratory viruses in the coming weeks and months. For patients experiencing influenza-like illness (defined as fever of greater than 100° F, and cough and/or sore throat in the absence of another known cause), NMDOH advises healthcare practitioners to order laboratory testing for both COVID-19 and influenza, as well as other respiratory pathogens when such testing is indicated. This is especially important at the beginning of influenza season, so that the potential co-circulation of influenza and COVID-19 can be identified and characterized.

NMDOH reminds providers and their staff that in accordance with New Mexico Administrative Code (NMAC) 7.4.3.13, influenza is a reportable condition for the following situations:

- Influenza, laboratory-confirmed hospitalizations only
- Influenza-associated pediatric death (<18 years old)
- Acute illness or condition of any type involving large numbers of persons in the same geographic area (outbreaks)
  - **Outbreaks should be reported to the on-call epidemiologist 24/7/365 at (505) 827-0006.**
- Other illnesses or condition of public health significance (novel influenza A)

### Influenza Vaccinations

In accordance with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), NMDOH recommends that **everyone** six months of age and older get flu vaccine each flu season. Influenza vaccination is especially important this season to reduce the overall respiratory virus burden in hospitals, and to reduce the risk of co-infection.

As part of updated Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) guidance, NMDOH now recommends that adults aged  $\geq 65$  years **preferentially** receive any one of the following higher dose or adjuvanted influenza vaccines: quadrivalent high-dose inactivated influenza

#### EPIDEMIOLOGY AND RESPONSE

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vaccine (HD-IIV4), quadrivalent recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV4), or quadrivalent adjuvanted inactivated influenza vaccine (aIIV4). If none of these three vaccines is available at an opportunity for vaccine administration, then any other age-appropriate influenza vaccine should be used.

The following groups of people are strongly recommended to be vaccinated because they are at high risk of having serious flu-related complications, or because they live with or care for people at high risk for developing flu-related complications:

- Children younger than 5, but especially children younger than 2 years old
  - Children aged 6 months through 8 years who have never been vaccinated against influenza, or have an unknown vaccination history, should receive two doses of influenza vaccine, administered at least 4 weeks apart. Given that the second dose should be ideally received by the end of October, the first dose should be administered as soon as possible.
- Pregnant women who are or will be pregnant during the flu season
- People ages 65 years and older
- People of any age with medical conditions like asthma, diabetes, lung or heart disease, and those who are immunocompromised
- People who live in nursing homes and other long-term care facilities
- People who live with or care for those at high risk for complications from flu, including healthcare personnel and caregivers of babies younger than six months
- American Indians and Alaskan Natives
- People who are morbidly obese

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommends deferral of influenza vaccination for persons with moderate or severe COVID-19 illness, and consideration of deferral for those in quarantine or with mild or asymptomatic COVID-19 illness. **However, provided that an individual is otherwise eligible for the vaccines, the ACIP states that any COVID-19 vaccine (including boosters) can be co-administered with the influenza vaccine.**

A summary of approved ages and doses for intramuscular influenza vaccines (IIV4s and RIV4) is below.

Vaccine	Approved Ages	Dose Volume
Afluria Quadrivalent	6 through 35 months	0.25 mL
	≥3 years	0.5 mL
Fluarix Quadrivalent	≥6 months	0.5 mL
FluLaval Quadrivalent	≥6 months	0.5 mL
Fluzone Quadrivalent	6 through 35 months	0.5 mL (see below)*
	≥3 years	0.5 mL
Flucelvax Quadrivalent	≥6 months	0.5 mL
Flublok Quadrivalent	≥18 years	0.5 mL

Fluzone High-Dose Quadrivalent	≥65 years	0.7 mL
Fluad Quadrivalent	≥65 years	0.5 mL

\*The approved dose volume per the package insert for Fluzone Quadrivalent is either 0.25 mL or 0.5 mL for ages 6 through 35 months. However, 0.25mL prefilled syringes are not available.

Administration of live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV4) is only recommended for person ages 2-49 years, 0.1 mL per nostril (0.2 mL total).

**All** vaccinations for children and adults are required by law to be entered into the New Mexico State Immunization Information System (NMSIIS). If you need access, training, or assistance with using NMSIIS, contact the Help Desk at (505) 827-2356.

### **Antiviral Treatment**

Influenza antiviral medications can be used to shorten the duration of illness, reduce the risk of complications, and reduce death in hospitalized patients. These medications are most effective early in the course of illness, especially within 48 hours of onset. Antivirals are also effective as prevention in high-risk people exposed to influenza.

During periods when influenza and COVID-19 are co-circulating in the community, empiric antiviral treatment is recommended as early as possible for any patient with suspected or confirmed influenza who is:

- a) hospitalized;
- b) has severe, complicated, or progressive respiratory illness;
- c) is at higher risk for influenza complications.

Although infrequently documented, clinicians should be aware that a positive COVID-19 test does not preclude influenza co-infection, and a positive influenza test does not preclude COVID-19 co-infection. Multiplex assays testing for both influenza and COVID-19, as well as respiratory panels detecting other respiratory viruses can inform clinical decision making.

### **For more information on influenza and COVID-19, see the following:**

- Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Resources for Health Professionals  
[Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Resources for Health Professionals | CDC](#)
- Similarities and Differences between Flu and COVID-19  
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/flu-vs-covid19.htm>
- Influenza Antiviral Medications: Summary for Clinicians  
<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/professionals/antivirals/summary-clinicians.htm>
- Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report: Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, 2022–23 Influenza Season  
[Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices — United States, 2022–23 Influenza Season | MMWR \(cdc.gov\)](#)

- Summary: ‘Prevention and Control of Seasonal Influenza with Vaccines: Recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP)—United States, 2022-23’  
[Summary of Recommendations \(cdc.gov\)](#)  
Note that a four-page summary of flu recommendations can be found here:  
[acip-2022-23-summary-of-recommendations.pdf \(cdc.gov\)](#)
  - Vaccine Administration Recommendations (e.g. co-administration guidelines)  
[Vaccine Administration Route and Site | CDC](#)
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New Mexico Health Alert Network: To register for the New Mexico Health Alert Network, click the following link to go directly to the HAN registration page  
<https://nm.readyop.com/fs/4cjZ/10b2> Please provide all information requested to begin receiving important health alerts and advisories.