

I-VAC

ILLINOIS VACCINATES
AGAINST COVID-19

A project led by the Illinois Chapter
of the American Academy of Pediatrics



I-VAC NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2023

VACCINE UPDATES CORNER:

1

Updated Statistics for Vaccine Acceptance & Hesitancy

A [study](#) among 23 countries has found that global COVID-19 vaccine acceptance is at about 80%, an increase of 5.2% from June 2021. In the US specifically, acceptance is also at about 80%, suggesting that the rates of acceptance and hesitancy in the states are in line with that in other Western countries.

This said, parental hesitancy to vaccinate their children is at 33.1%, which is **down** from 46% in 2021. A strong provider recommendation remains essential in vaccinating both kids and adults.



2

Addressing Vaccine Disinformation

[Disinformation](#) about COVID-19 vaccines continues to circulate, particularly about the vaccines causing sudden deaths and other severe health issues. In fact, it's expected that a [very small group of people](#) are responsible for the majority of disinformation circulating on the internet. However, it remains clear that the benefits of vaccination outweigh the risks, that COVID-19 infection is more likely to cause severe health issues and deaths, and that COVID-19 vaccines save lives. As providers, it is important to [understand circulating disinformation](#) and have productive conversations with hesitant patients.

3

Encouraging Bivalent Boosters

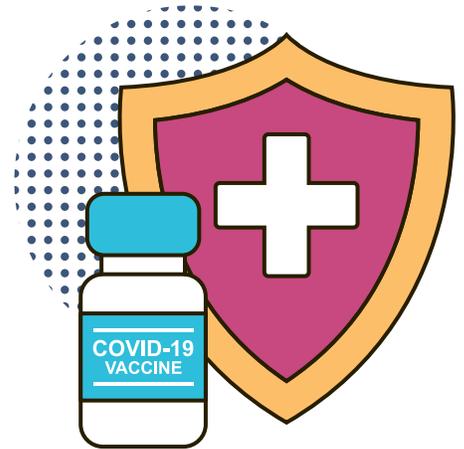
Rates of vaccination with a COVID-19 bivalent booster are lagging in the U.S., with only [15%](#) of the population having received an updated dose. In Illinois, only about 19% of residents have received an updated booster. Among adults, the [most common reasons](#) for not receiving a bivalent booster include lack of awareness about eligibility and overconfidence in immunity. On the other hand, the most common reasons for remaining up-to-date include to protect oneself, avoid severe disease, and to protect others. That being said, vaccine providers should be prepared to discuss booster benefits and the impacts of waning immunity with their patients.



4

The Future of COVID-19 Vaccines

The Food and Drug Administration's (FDA's) Vaccine and Related Biological Products Advisory Committee (VRBPAC) met on 1/26/23 to [discuss the future of COVID-19 vaccines](#). Ultimately, the committee determined that the same bivalent vaccine composition should be used for all COVID-19 vaccines doses (primary series and boosters). The committee also wants to simplify the dosing schedule, but no recommended changes were voted on. Finally, the possibility of applying the annual flu vaccine model to COVID-19 vaccines was discussed, but again, no formal votes were cast regarding this process. The Center for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC's) Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) will meet to discuss COVID-19 vaccines on [February 24th](#), where some of these topics may gain additional movement. You can also learn more about these topics from a webinar [recording](#) and [Q&A](#) with Your Local Epidemiologist, Katelyn Jetelina.



MONITORING COVID-19 ACTIVITY IN ILLINOIS

The Illinois Department of Public Health (IDPH), in partnership with the Discovery Partners Institute (DPI), has launched a [website](#) to track COVID-19 activity in wastewater. Wastewater treatment plants throughout the state volunteer to participate in the program by submitting biweekly samples, which are then submitted to labs for analysis. Monitoring water samples can help detect disease variants and predict increases in disease transmission. DPI has also been conducting wastewater surveillance with CDPH [since 2021](#), though there is not a publicly available website tracking this data.

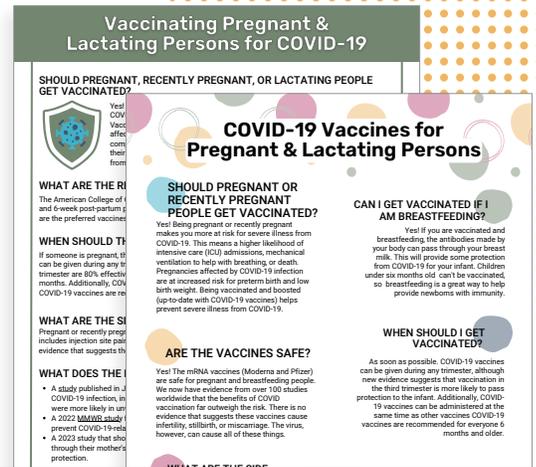
COVID-19 INFECTION DURING PREGNANCY – MATERNAL AND NEWBORN HEALTH OUTCOMES

[Studies](#) continue to accumulate demonstrating the effectiveness of COVID-19 vaccines in avoiding severe life-threatening disease. Studies also continue to find that COVID-19 infection during pregnancy increases the risk of maternal mortality and adverse newborn outcomes. Those who were infected with COVID-19 during pregnancy were more likely to be admitted to the ICU, put on a ventilator, and to die than pregnant people who were not infected. COVID-19 infection during pregnancy can also negatively impact the infant by increasing the risk of severe outcomes, being born preterm, and being treated in the PICU. Some newborns have even tested positive for COVID-19 if the birthing parent was infected close to delivery. Vaccination during pregnancy is safe and can help prevent these severe outcomes for both the pregnant individual and baby.



COVID-19 TRAINING FOR OBGYNs

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists has developed a [COVID-19 vaccine confidence training and toolkit](#), intended to teach obstetricians, gynecologists, and obstetric care clinicians about the importance of discussing vaccines with their patients. The 1.5 hour training provides information on the COVID-19 vaccination landscape, the importance of vaccinating pregnant populations, and techniques for having effective conversations with patients. You can also check out I-VAC's updated handouts for [Pregnant People](#) and for [OBGYNs](#).



EMAIL TRAINING COURSE

Are you a medical student or practicing provider wishing you received more specialized training on COVID-19 vaccines? Are you hesitant to commit a lot of time to learn about this topic? Sign up for our free [COVID-19 Email Training Course](#), where you will receive one email a day for five days with all the basics you need to know about COVID-19 vaccines!

UPCOMING EVENTS:



OFFICE HOURS

I-VAC [office hours](#) are now being held monthly. Office hours offer an opportunity for you to ask any COVID-19 vaccine implementation questions in a casual, virtual setting. Join us for the whole hour or for as long as you need assistance!



The next session will be held **Wednesday, March 1 at 12:00 p.m. with Dr. Andrea Kane.**

Registration is not required – just click [this link](#) to join.



BEYOND THE NEEDLE PODCAST

Have you tuned into the Beyond the Needle podcast? Listen to the full series of 15 episodes [here!](#)



LEARNING COLLABORATIVES

Join a learning collaborative session, hosted by ECHO-Chicago on 2/15 (for providers seeing adult populations) and 2/21 (for providers seeing pediatric populations).

[Learn more and register here.](#)



BOOTCAMP

Our next virtual COVID-19 Vaccine Bootcamp will be held Friday, March 3rd from 8 a.m.–12:30 p.m.

[Register here.](#)

