



I-VAC

ILLINOIS VACCINATES
AGAINST COVID-19

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

I-VAC NEWSLETTER

FEBRUARY 2024

COVID-19 VACCINE UPDATES:

1

MODERNA COVID-19 VACCINE RETURNS

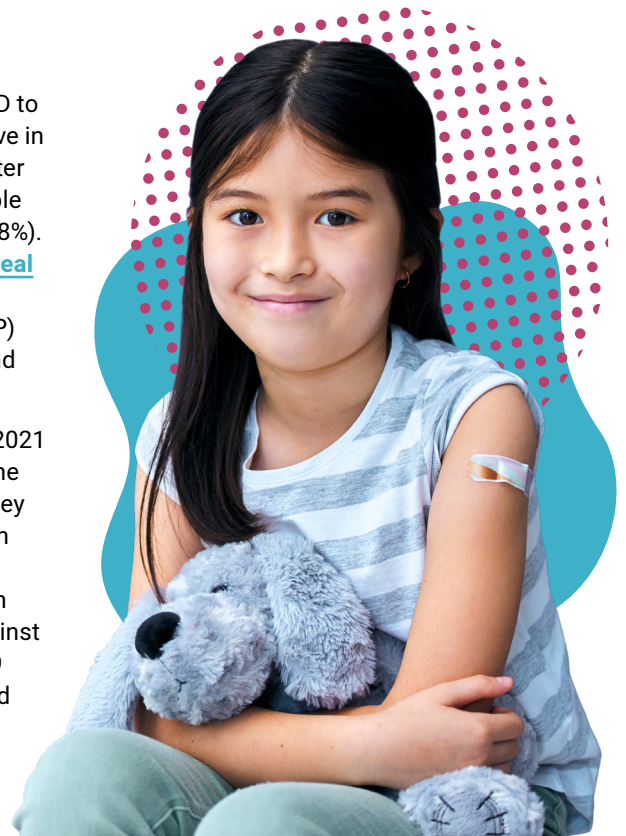
As of January 9, 2024, [Moderna started allowing a 100% return policy](#) for COVID-19 vaccines for children under 12. This is applicable to doses privately purchased only. This initiative aims to boost vaccination rates amid rising infections and hospitalizations, addressing the challenge providers face in predicting exact dose needs and encouraging a healthy stock without worrying about unused inventory.

2

COVID-19 VACCINE BENEFITS FOR CHILDREN

A new [study](#), as part of the National Institutes of Health's Researching COVID to Enhance Recovery Initiative, found that COVID-19 vaccines are ~35% effective in preventing probable or diagnosed long COVID in children for about a year after vaccination. Adolescents had a higher vaccine effectiveness against probable or diagnosed long COVID (50.3%) compared to children ages 5-11 years (23.8%). This protection appears to be tied to the prevention of a COVID infection. A [real world analysis](#) led by researchers from the Perelman School of Medicine at the University of Pennsylvania and Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) showed that vaccinated children were significantly protected from illness and showed no increased signs of any heart related complications.

The study looked at the periods marked by the Delta and Omicron waves in 2021 and 2022 where adolescents (12-20 years old) were 98% less likely to become infected during the Delta wave, as compared to their unvaccinated peers. They were 86% less likely to become infected during the Omicron wave. Protection against severe disease and likelihood of ICU admission also decreased dramatically. Similarly, in children 5-11 years old, protection against infection was 74% greater than unvaccinated peers, while comparative protection against ICU admission was 85%. These results reiterate the importance of COVID-19 vaccines and their ability to prevent severe disease, hospital admissions, and ultimately long COVID in children.





3

COVID-19 AND RSV IMMUNIZATIONS IN V-SAFE

Recipients of these products can now [register for V-Safe](#) and participate in health check-ins following immunization:

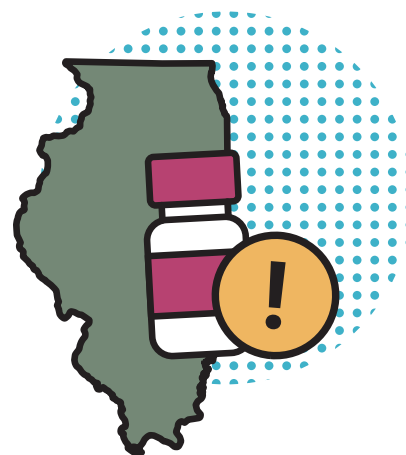
- Children over the age of six months receiving the 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccine by Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna.
- People over the age of twelve receiving the 2023-2024 updated COVID-19 vaccine by Novavax.
- Adults over the age of 60 receiving a Respiratory Syncytial Virus (RSV) Vaccine (Abrysvo by Pfizer or Arexvy by GSK).
- Pregnant people receiving the RSV vaccine (Abrysvo by Pfizer).

4

COVID-19 VACCINE REIMBURSEMENT AND RATE CHANGES

The Illinois Department of Healthcare and Family Services (HFS) has updated its [State Plan Amendment \(SPA\)](#). In line with other routine vaccines, providers will be reimbursed a vaccine administration fee of \$16.71 for children eligible for VFC.

Providers participating in the Bridge Access Program can now be reimbursed up to \$43.06 for each dose administered. Eligible providers outside of Chicago must have completed the IDPH COVID-19 Vaccine Provider Agreement by Monday, February 12, 2024 to receive reimbursement payments. The reimbursement agreement will expire on May 12, 2024, or until funds are exhausted. Refer to the [IDPH Siren](#) to download the reimbursement provider agreement. More information from CDPH for Chicago Bridge Access providers to come.



THE FACTS ABOUT DNA IN VACCINES

There have been multiple instances of leaders speaking out about their concerns for the presence of DNA fragments in COVID-19 vaccines. As explained by [Your Local Epidemiologist](#), part of this conversation is true: all vaccines do, in fact, contain DNA fragments. This is because vaccine production requires the use of cells, which contain DNA. However, there is no need for concern about the inclusion of these components in vaccines. It is biologically impossible for random DNA fragments to integrate into our genes and therefore cannot cause harm such as cancer or autoimmune disease. Dr. Offit with the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) also offers a [video explanation](#) for why there is no cause for concern. Additional information can also be found through CHOP's resources on [COVID-19 vaccines](#) and [DNA as an ingredient in vaccines](#).

RESOURCES

HOME TEST TO TREAT COMMUNICATIONS TOOLKIT

HHS, in conjunction with other partners, has piloted and launched a home (COVID and Flu) test to treat program to provide free at-home test kits, telehealth appointments and, if sick, access to medications that will last until spring of 2024. Visit the [communications toolkit](#) for language, flyers, and additional resources to help promote the program with your patients.

[View Toolkit](#)

COMBAT VACCINE MISINFORMATION WITH A NEW TOOLKIT FROM ICAAP

The COVID-19 Pandemic created widespread and long-lasting societal disruptions. It brought to light the deeply rooted inequities within our society and created opportunities for bad actors to spread disinformation. These inequities, along with rampant mis- and disinformation, have increased vaccine hesitancy throughout the United States. This [toolkit](#) was developed with pediatric healthcare providers in mind to take actionable steps in mitigating the impact of mis- and disinformation and increasing vaccine confidence.

With This Toolkit, Healthcare Providers Can:

- Gain a deeper understanding of disinformation & misinformation surrounding vaccines
- Learn how misinformation is spreading in today's digital landscape
- Understand the drivers behind this misinformation
- Explore ways individuals and clinics can better address dis- and misinformation
- Build motivational interviewing skills
- Find new ways to better manage vaccine refusals

[View Toolkit](#)

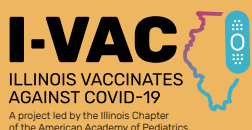


MEET DOCTORS, PATIENTS, FACTS

A New COVID-19 YouTube Resource to Share with Patients



As a practicing health care provider, your time with patients is limited. Enter [Doctors, Patients, Facts](#), a new YouTube channel developed in partnership with I-VAC, the Illinois Academy of Family Physicians (IAFP), and the Family Health Foundation of Illinois, dedicated to answering commonly asked questions about COVID-19. Now you can encourage your patients to explore the new channel to get expert advice from pediatricians, physicians, medical specialists, and public health experts in short one-to-two-minute videos, so you can make the most of your appointment time!



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