

Janet T. Mills
Governor

Jeanne M. Lambrew, Ph.D.
Commissioner



Maine Department of Health and Human Services
Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention
11 State House Station
286 Water Street
Augusta, Maine 04333-0011
Tel; (207) 287-8016; Fax (207) 287-9058
TTY: Dial 711 (Maine Relay)

Continuing Vaccination During COVID-19 Pandemic

The American Academy of Pediatrics and the U.S. Centers for Disease Control recommend that childhood immunizations continue to be prioritized during the COVID-19 pandemic. However, parents may be reluctant to bring their children in during the pandemic. To help reassure them, you may use the following messages, adapting them as needed to how your clinic is operating:

1. Emphasize steps your practice is taking to keep patients and clinic staff safe.

- "We are taking several precautions to help keep our patients safe, including scheduling baby shot visits in the morning and only seeing sick children in the afternoon."
- "We're screening everyone who comes into the office, including taking everyone's temperature."
- "We disinfect our clinic twice daily and exam rooms after each visit."
- "We have designated areas of our offices to separate sick patients from healthy patients."
- "We all wear masks at all times."
- "We're scheduling appointments so only one patient is at the clinic at a given time."

2. Consider alternate ways to deliver care.

- "We can schedule a telehealth appointment, where I address your questions and concerns on your phone or computer, followed by a brief immunization visit to help keep your baby safe."
- "Our clinic is offering 'drive-thru' immunizations, so you don't even have to come inside the clinic!"

3. Reinforce the fact that vaccine-preventable diseases will continue to be a threat to the child.

- "As a parent, I would not wait to immunize my baby; as your doctor, I am strongly recommending we help protect your baby from diseases that could cause harm during or after the pandemic."

4. Inform them that getting caught up later may not be so easy.

- "When Maine 'reopens,' there may be many children who need to catch up on immunizations, increasing wait times for appointments. While waiting they could be exposed to dangerous vaccine-preventable diseases circulating in the community. Let's avoid that danger by keeping your child on track."

Thank you for all that you do for the Maine Immunization Program and the children of Maine.