

Safe Vaccine Administration during the COVID-19 Pandemic

Using infection-prevention practices with all patients is especially critical during the COVID-19 pandemic. Vaccination providers should adhere to the guidance below:

Staff personal infection prevention and control procedures

- Wear a **medical facemask** at all times.
- Conduct recommended **hand hygiene** and **cleaning of the environment** between all patient appointments.
- Use **eye protection** based on level of community transmission:
 - Moderate to substantial:* Healthcare providers should wear eye protection given the increased likelihood of encountering asymptomatic COVID-19 patients.
 - Minimal to none:* Universal eye protection is considered optional, unless otherwise indicated as a part of the Healthcare Infection Control Practices Advisory Committee's (HICPAC's) standard precautions.
- Wear gloves when administering intranasal or oral vaccines. Gloves should be changed with each patient in addition to performing hand hygiene. Administration of these vaccines is not considered an aerosol-generating procedure and thus the use of an N95 or higher-level respirator is not necessarily required.
- If gloves are also worn when administering intramuscular or subcutaneous vaccines, they should also be changed with each patient in addition to performing hand hygiene.

Other facility-level procedures to minimize exposure among patients

- Screen patients for COVID-19 symptoms and their contact with COVID-19, before and upon arrival.
- Isolate any symptomatic patients as soon as possible.
- Limit and monitor points of entry to the facility and install barriers to limit contact with patients at triage.
- Implement policies for the use of a cloth face covering in persons over the age of 2 years (if tolerated).
- Promote adherence to respiratory hygiene, cough etiquette, and hand hygiene among everyone in the facility.
- Separate sick patients from well patients by scheduling these visits during different times of the day.
- Ask patients to remain outside until they are called into the facility, if possible.
- Ensure that physical-distancing measures, with separation of at least 6 feet between patients and visitors, are maintained during all aspects of the visit, including check-in, checkout, screening procedures, and post-vaccination monitoring, using strategies such as physical barriers, signs, ropes, and floor markings.
- Utilize electronic communications as much as possible (e.g., filling out needed paperwork online in advance) to minimize time in the office as well as reuse of materials (e.g., clipboards, pens).

Resources:

1. CDC's Interim Guidance for Immunization Services During the COVID-19 Pandemic (online resource):
[cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pandemic-guidance/index.html)
2. Louisiana Immunization Program's resources on Routine Vaccination During the Pandemic (online resource):
ldh.la.gov/index.cfm/page/3955
3. CDC's Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) - Information for Healthcare Professionals (online resource):
[cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/hcp/index.html)

For more information or if you have questions with this guidance, please contact your regional immunization consultant or the Immunization Program main office at 504-568-2600.