

Increasing Adult Immunization Rates through Obstetrician-Gynecologist Partnerships

ACOG Adult Immunization Cooperative Agreement

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Project Background

- 4-year cooperative agreement funded by CDC
 - 3-year demonstration phase working directly with ob-gyns
 - 1-year dissemination phase to share findings from the demo phase
- Aimed at increasing rates of 5 adult immunizations in pregnant and non-pregnant populations
- Worked closely with 19 diverse ob-gyn practices in two states (Massachusetts and California)
 - On-going collaboration with state health departments for resources and technical support
 - Focused on implementation & adaptation of the National Vaccine Advisory Committee's (NVAC) Standards for Adult Immunization Practice



Targeted Strategies

- Standing orders
- Strong recommendations
- Consistent documentation
- Prompting
- Engaging practice staff
- IIS enrollment
- Immunization referral
- Patient & health care provider education and use of resources



Project Findings: Immunization Rates



Increasing Adult Immunization Rates Project Cohort: Comparisons of Immunization Rates by Immunization and Project Year

	Immunization Rates at Baseline	Immunization Rates at Year 3	Immunization Rates Percent Change Over Course of Project
Tdap	24%	63%	163%
Influenza	21%	35%	66%
Hepatitis B	55%	72%	31%
Herpes Zoster	10%	33%	233%
Pneumococcal	30%	33%	11%



Project Findings: Missed Opportunities



Increasing Adult Immunization Rates Project Cohort: Comparisons of Missed Opportunity Rates by Immunization and Project Year			
	Missed Opportunities at Baseline	Missed Opportunities at Year 3	Missed Opportunities Percent Change Over Course of Project
Tdap	76%	37%	-51%
Influenza	79%	65%	-17%
Hepatitis B	45%	28%	-38%
Herpes Zoster	90%	67%	-26%
Pneumococcal	70%	67%	-4%

Missed opportunity = eligible for a vaccine but no record of contraindication, receipt, or refusal of the vaccine

Identifying Effective Strategies

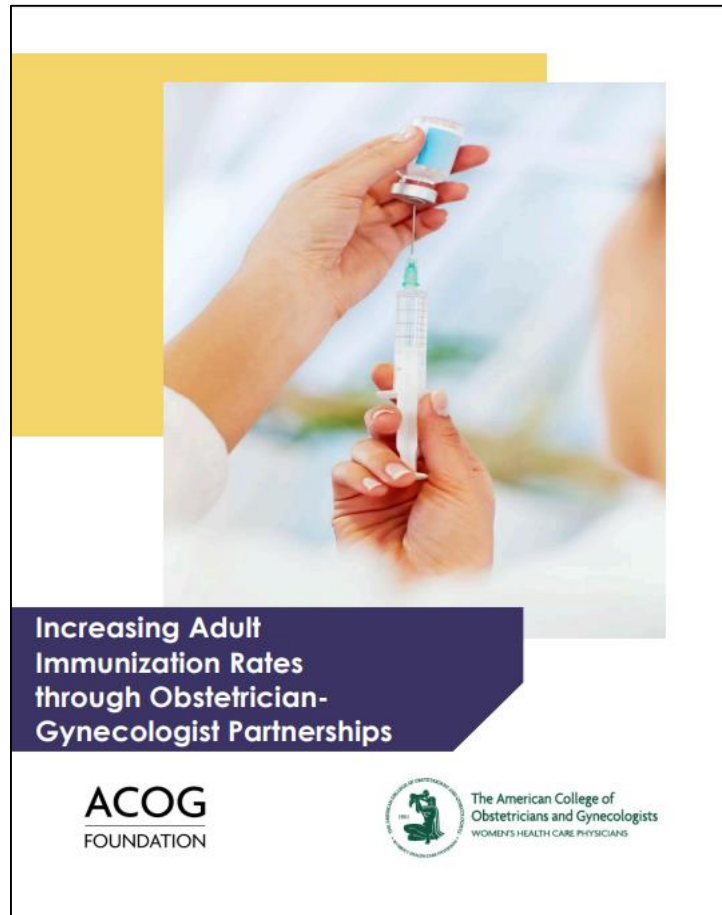
- ACOG identified the immunization improvement strategies that, in addition to impacting immunization rates, were:
 - Successfully implemented by the Champions
 - Capable of driving change at the *practice* level
 - Easy to implement in all practice settings
 - Sustainable over time
 - Applicable to the wider ACOG membership



Strategies for Effectively Integrating Immunizations into Routine Obstetric-Gynecologic Care

1. Administer routinely discussed and recommended vaccines, which at a minimum include influenza, Tdap, and HPV.
2. Create a culture of immunization by educating and involving all staff in immunization processes. Delegate the responsibilities of maintaining and championing an immunization program to a team of staff, as appropriate for your practice structure.
3. Develop a standard process for assessing, recommending, administering, and documenting vaccination status of patients.
4. Utilize existing systems and resources to conduct periodic assessments of immunization rates among patients to determine if and where progress is needed.

Final Report on Project Demonstration Phase



- *Increasing Adult Immunization Rates through Obstetrician-Gynecologist Partnerships* **project report**

- › Detailed descriptions of:

- › Project background
- › Data collection methods
- › Process for determining the strategies
- › Examples, suggestions, activities, and other considerations for implementation of each strategy
- › Identified challenges & ongoing opportunities around adult immunizations

Increasing Adult Immunization Rates through Obstetrician-Gynecologist Partnerships final report

<http://immunizationforwomen.org/obgynpartnerships.php>



Activities & Considerations for Implementation

- **Document declinations** and reintroduce discussion at subsequent visits
- **Expand immunization** offerings methodically
- **Develop scripts** for staff to follow when promoting immunizations
- **Delegate immunization program** duties to an Immunization Champion team or individual



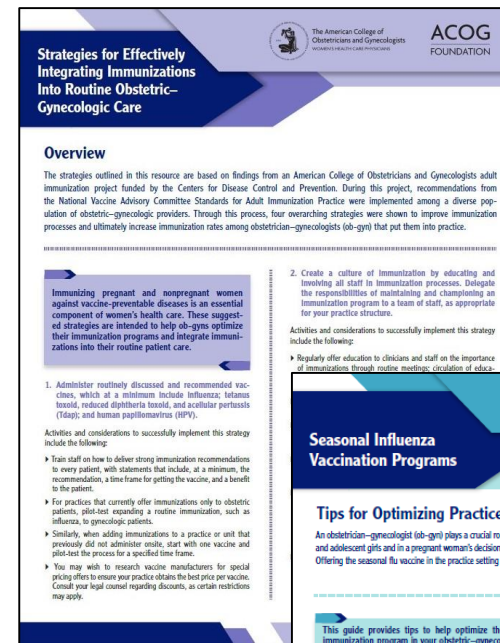
Activities & Considerations for Implementation

- When standing orders are not feasible, develop a **standard immunization process**
- **Gather input from staff** prior to implementation of process improvements
- Consider shifting **administration of immunizations to early in the patient visit**
- Create a **natural prompt** for Tdap administration
- **Build immunization reminder language** into intake, check-in, and check-out forms



Adult Immunization Project Resources

- Strategies for Integrating Immunizations into Routine Obstetric-Gynecologic Practice **tip sheet**
- Developing an Immunization Referral System **tip sheet**
- Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programs: Tips for Optimizing Practice Management **tip sheet**
- Optimizing Immunization Programs in Obstetric-Gynecologic Practices **tool kit**



Strategies for Effectively Integrating Immunizations Into Routine Obstetric-Gynecologic Care

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Overview

The strategies outlined in this resource are based on findings from an American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists adult immunization project funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. During this project, recommendations from the National Vaccine Advisory Committee Standards for Adult Immunization Practice were implemented among a diverse population of obstetric-gynecologic providers. Through this process, four overarching strategies were shown to improve immunization processes and ultimately increase immunization rates among obstetrician-gynecologists (ob-gyn) that put them into practice.

Immunizing pregnant and nonpregnant women against vaccine-preventable diseases is an essential component of women's health care. These suggested strategies are intended to help ob-gyns optimize their immunization programs and integrate immunizations into their routine patient care.

1. Administer routinely discussed and recommended vaccines, which at a minimum include influenza; tetanus toxoid, reduced diphtheria toxoid, and acellular pertussis (Tdap); and human papillomavirus (HPV).

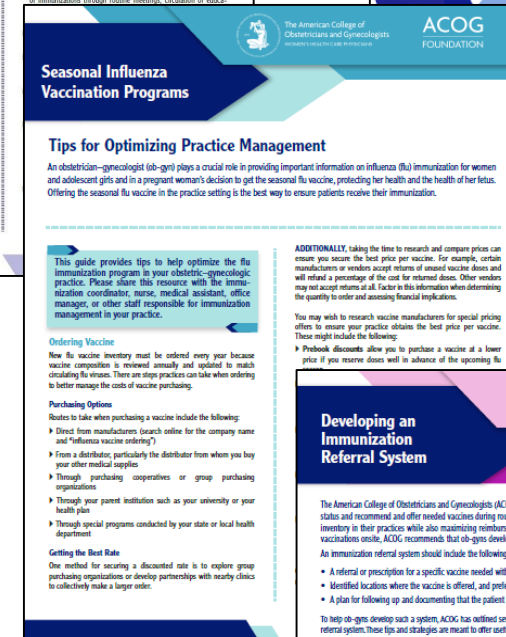
Activities and considerations to successfully implement this strategy include the following:

- ▶ Train staff on how to deliver strong immunization recommendations to every patient, with statements that include, at a minimum, the recommendation, a time frame for getting the vaccine, and a benefit to the patient.
- ▶ For practices that currently offer immunizations only to obstetric patients, consider expanding a routine immunization, such as influenza, to gynecologic patients.
- ▶ Similarly, when adding immunizations to a practice or unit that previously did not administer routine, start with one vaccine and pilot-test the process for a specified time frame.
- ▶ You may wish to research vaccine manufacturers for special pricing offers to ensure your practice obtains the best price per vaccine. Consult your legal counsel regarding discounts, as certain restrictions may apply.

2. Create a culture of immunization by educating and involving all staff in immunization processes. Delegate the responsibilities of maintaining and championing an immunization program to a team of staff, as appropriate for your practice structure.

Activities and considerations to successfully implement this strategy include the following:

- ▶ Regularly offer education to clinicians and staff on the importance of immunizations through routine meetings; circulation of education materials.



Seasonal Influenza Vaccination Programs

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Tips for Optimizing Practice Management

An obstetrician-gynecologist (ob-gyn) plays a crucial role in providing important information on influenza (flu) immunization for women and adolescent girls and in a pregnant woman's decision to get the seasonal flu vaccine, protecting her health and the health of her fetus. Offering the seasonal flu vaccine in the practice setting is the best way to ensure patients receive their immunization.

This guide provides tips to help optimize the flu immunization program in your obstetric-gynecologic practice. Please share this resource with the immunization coordinator, nurse, medical assistant, office manager, or other staff responsible for immunization management in your practice.

Ordering Vaccine

New flu vaccine inventory must be ordered every year because vaccine composition is reviewed annually and updated to match circulating flu viruses. There are steps practices can take when ordering to better manage the costs of vaccine purchasing.

Purchasing Options

Routes to take when purchasing a vaccine include the following:

- ▶ Direct from manufacturers (search online for the company name and "influenza vaccine ordering")
- ▶ From a distributor, particularly the distributor from whom you buy your other medical supplies
- ▶ Through purchasing cooperatives or group purchasing organizations
- ▶ Through your parent institution such as your university or your health plan
- ▶ Through special programs conducted by your state or local health department

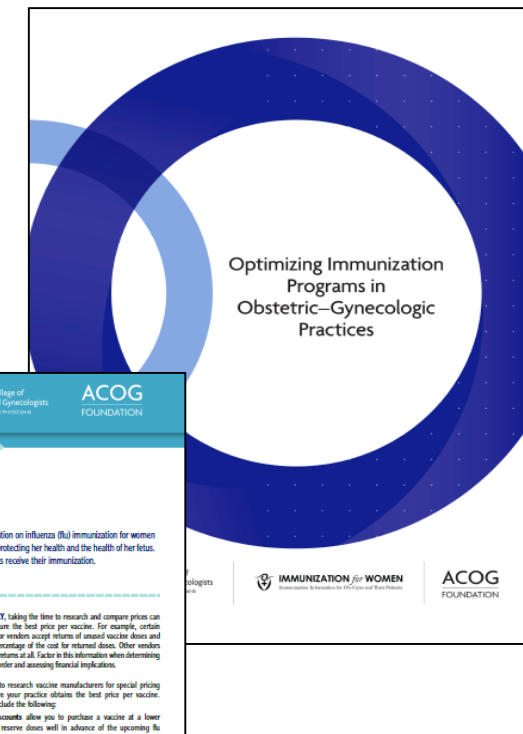
Getting the Best Rate

One method for securing a discounted rate is to explore group purchasing organizations or develop partnerships with nearby clinics to collectively make a larger order.

ADDITIONALLY, taking the time to research and compare prices can ensure you secure the best price per vaccine. For example, certain manufacturers or vendors accept returns of unused vaccine doses and will refund a percentage of the cost for returned doses. Other vendors may not accept returns at all. Factor in this information when determining the quantity to order and assessing financial implications.

You may wish to research vaccine manufacturers for special pricing offers to ensure your practice obtains the best price per vaccine. These might include the following:

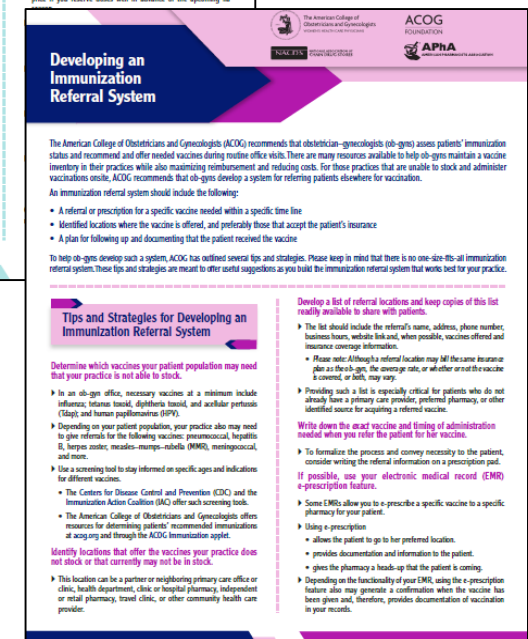
- ▶ **Prebook discounts** allow you to purchase a vaccine at a lower price if you reserve doses well in advance of the upcoming flu season.



Optimizing Immunization Programs in Obstetric-Gynecologic Practices

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Developing an Immunization Referral System

The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) recommends that obstetrician-gynecologists (ob-gyns) assess patients' immunization status and recommend and offer needed vaccines during routine office visits. There are many resources available to help ob-gyns maintain a vaccine inventory at their practices while also maximizing reimbursement and reducing costs. For those practices that are unable to stock and administer vaccinations onsite, ACOG recommends that ob-gyns develop a system for referring patients elsewhere for vaccination.

An immunization referral system should include the following:

- A referral or prescription for a specific vaccine needed within a specific time frame
- Identified locations where the vaccine is offered, and preferably those that accept the patient's insurance
- A plan for following up and documenting that the patient received the vaccine

To help ob-gyns develop such a system, ACOG has outlined several tips and strategies. Please keep in mind that there is no one-size-fits-all immunization referral system. These tips and strategies are meant to offer useful suggestions as you build the immunization referral system that works best for your practice.

Tips and Strategies for Developing an Immunization Referral System

Determine which vaccines your patient population may need that your practice is not in stock.

- ▶ In an ob-gyn office, necessary vaccines at a minimum include influenza; tetanus toxoid, diphtheria toxoid, and acellular pertussis (Tdap); and human papillomavirus (HPV).
- ▶ Depending on your patient population, your practice also may need to give referrals for the following vaccines: pneumococcal, hepatitis B, herpes zoster, measles-mumps-rubella (MMR), meningococcal, and more.
- ▶ Use a screening tool to stay informed on specific ages and indications for different vaccines.
- ▶ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) offer such screening tools.
- ▶ The American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists offers resources for determining patients' recommended immunizations at acog.org and through the ACOG Immunization applet.

Identify locations that offer the vaccines your practice does not stock or that currently may not be in stock.

- ▶ This location can be a partner or neighboring primary care office or clinic, health department, clinic or hospital pharmacy, independent or retail pharmacy, travel clinic, or other community health care provider.

Develop a list of referral locations and keep copies of this list readily available to share with patients.

- ▶ The list should include the referral's name, address, phone number, business hours, website link and, when possible, vaccines offered and insurance coverage information.
- ▶ **Please note:** Although a referral location may bill the same insurance plan as the ob-gyn, the average rate, or whether or not the vaccine is covered, it will vary.
- ▶ Providing such a list is especially critical for patients who do not already have a primary care provider, preferred pharmacy, or other identified source for acquiring a referred vaccine.

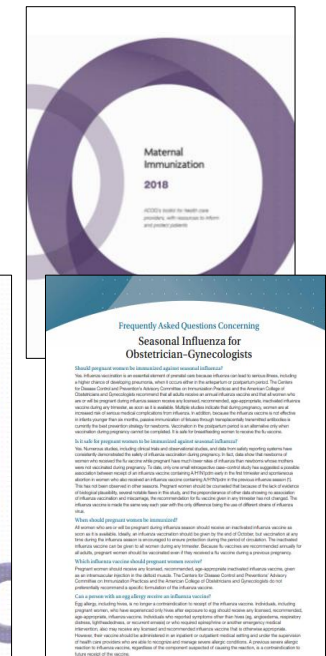
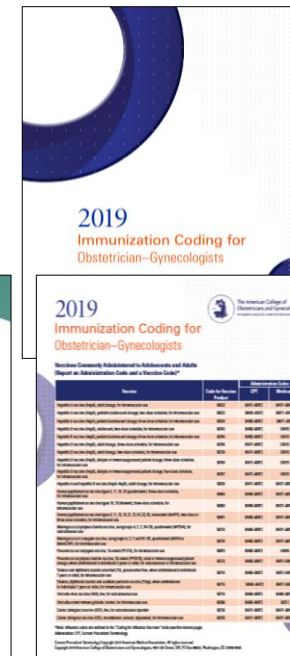
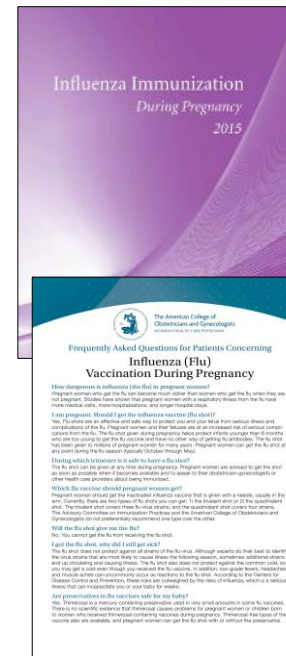
Write down the cost of vaccine and timing of administration needed when you refer the patient for his vaccine.

- ▶ To formalize the process and convey necessity to the patient, consider writing the referral information on a prescription pad.
- ▶ **If possible, use your electronic medical record (EMR) e-prescription feature.**
- ▶ Some EMRs allow you to e-prescribe a specific vaccine to a specific pharmacy for your patient.
- ▶ Using e-prescription
 - allow the patient to go to her preferred location.
 - provide documentation and information to the patient.
 - gives the pharmacy a heads-up that the patient is coming.
- ▶ Depending on the functionality of your EMR, using the e-prescription feature also may generate a confirmation when the vaccine has been given or, therefore, provide documentation of vaccination in your records.

Other ACOG Immunization Resources

[ImmunizationforWomen.org](http://www.immunizationforwomen.org) website

- Clinical guidance
- ACOG app with Immunization applet
- Toolkits & FAQs
- Coding and reimbursement resources
- Practice management resources
- Vaccine safety resources



Contact the ACOG Immunization Department

Immunization@acog.org

www.ImmunizationforWomen.org

www.acog.org/immunization



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