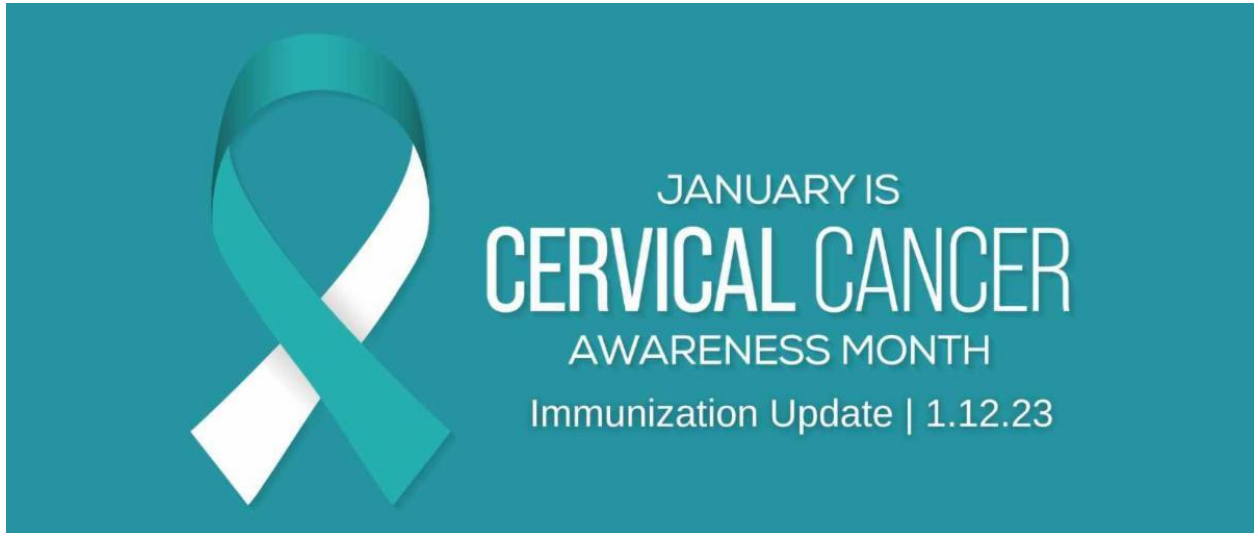


## IMMUNIZATION Update

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January 12, 2023 | Issue 93



### Question of the Week



### How does HPV cause cervical cancer?

January is Cervical Cancer Awareness Month, a time to honor the lives lost to cervical cancer, support those battling cervical cancer and remind community members to get vaccinated for HPV (human papillomavirus).

HPV is the virus that causes cervical cancer. When the body's immune system can't eliminate an HPV infection with oncogenic HPV types, it can linger over time, turning normal cells into abnormal cells and then cancer. About 10 percent of women with HPV infection on their cervix will develop long-lasting HPV infections that put them at risk for cervical cancer.

Cervical cancer is a largely preventable disease, yet Louisiana has one of the highest cervical cancer rates in the U.S. This disease and other HPV-related cancers can be prevented in women and men with the HPV vaccine.

#### How to improve HPV vaccination rates:

- Remind patients and/or parents that the HPV vaccine is available.
- Schedule the next appointment automatically to complete the three-part vaccination series.
- Make HPV vaccinations a standing order for all eligible patients.
- Remind patients and/or parents that insurance will cover the cost of the HPV vaccine.

#### Resources

- [Call-to-action flyer](#)
- [How does HPV cause cervical cancer \(Video\)](#)
- [HPV talking points](#)
- [LCP: Cervical Cancer & HPV](#)

POLL: Have you received your HPV vaccine?

Yes

No

**Medicare Part D eliminates recipients' out-of-pocket cost for all ACIP-recommended vaccines starting January 1, 2023**

Beginning January 1 of this year, the [Inflation Reduction Act](#) (IRA) eliminated out-of-pocket costs for [Medicare Part D](#) beneficiaries who receive vaccines recommended for adults by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). For the first time, people with Medicare's prescription drug coverage will pay no deductible and will not be responsible for any cost-sharing for ACIP-recommended vaccines, including those for shingles, Tdap, and travel.

[Medicare Part D plans](#) cover all commercially available vaccines, reasonable and necessary to prevent illness and is not covered by Medicare Part B. Medicare Part B vaccines (including influenza and pneumococcal vaccines) have been given to adult beneficiaries without cost-sharing for many years.

This important new Medicare Part D benefit removes financial barriers to vaccination for millions of people ages 65 years and older: share the news with your patients, colleagues, and friends. Encourage those with Medicare Part D to get the vaccines they need today.

**Updated consumer content pages for your office or pharmacy**

Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has updated and streamlined COVID-19 consumer content pages, making it easier for the general public to access and understand continually changing COVID-19 vaccine information. Listed below are the updated, printable and translated pages your office can use, share and promote.

- [Benefits of vaccination](#)
- [Vaccine products](#)
- [Vaccine safety](#)
- [How vaccines work](#)
- [Who can get vaccinated and when](#)
- [Where to get vaccinated](#)
- [Vaccine data](#)
- [Answers to frequently asked questions](#)



## Week 52 FluView report



Seasonal influenza activity remains high but is declining in most areas. The highest levels are in the southeast and south-central parts of the country, followed by the Mid-Atlantic and the south-central West Coast regions. Click below for key points summarizing FluView data and other relevant flu-related information.

### In Louisiana during Week 52:

- **5.6%** of patient visits reported through the U.S. Outpatient Influenza-like Illness Surveillance Network (ILINet) were due to influenza-like illness (ILI).
- This percentage is above the regional baseline of 3.9%.

- The ILI case definition changed starting with the 2021–2022 season: fever >100.3 AND cough and/or sore throat.

### [FluView Report Week 52](#)

## Vax Matters podcast: HPV



Be immune from misinformation with the Office of Public Health's Vax Matters podcast.

In honor of cervical cancer awareness month, we will #throwback to our June 22, 2022, Vax Matters episode about human papillomavirus or HPV. How did it come about? What were the complications of the virus? How was the vaccine developed? We invited Dr. Joseph Bocchini on Vax Matters to help us answer these questions. Dr. Bocchini currently serves as Director of Willis-Knighton Children's Health Services and Professor and Vice Chairman of the Tulane University Department of Pediatrics.

Listen to the episode [here](#).

All Vax Matters episodes are available on most major podcast platforms. Click here to listen now: [Apple](#), [Spotify](#), [Google Podcasts](#), [Stitcher](#), [Amazon](#), [Audible](#).

If you would like to be a future guest on the Vax Matter podcast, contact [jourdan.barnes@la.gov](mailto:jourdan.barnes@la.gov)

## Public Health Communications Collaborative (PHCC) misinformation alerts and Damar Hamlin

As we usher in a new year, the spread of misinformation and disinformation on COVID-19 vaccine safety and efficacy continues.

On January 2, 2023, football player Damar Hamlin collapsed on the field and suffered a cardiac arrest during an NFL game. Since Hamlin's collapse, there has been widespread misinformation baselessly attributing his injury to his COVID-19 vaccination.

Find fact-checked information about Hamlin and vaccine misinformation in PHCC's latest [misinformation alert](#), where they share clear, accurate information to answer questions such as: "Was Hamlin's cardiac arrest caused by a COVID-19 vaccine," and "Do mRNA COVID-19 vaccines increase the risk of heart-related problems?"

Based on automated media monitoring and manual review by public health data analysts at The Public Good Projects, PHCC's [Misinformation Alerts](#) are categorized as low, medium, or high risk. With COVID-19 misinformation and disinformation showing no signs of stopping, [visit PHCC's website](#) for insights and guidance on responding with public health messaging focused on the facts.

## Human papillomavirus (HPV) ACIP vaccine recommendations

The ACIP provides advice and guidance to the director of the CDC regarding the use of vaccines and related agents for control of vaccine-preventable diseases in the civilian population of the United States. The CDC director reviews recommendations made by the ACIP and, if adopted, are published as official CDC/HHS recommendations in the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR).

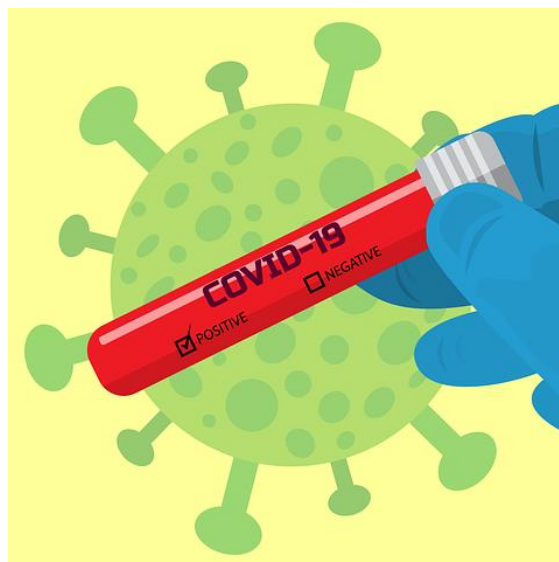
### HPV Vaccine recommendations:

- HPV vaccine is recommended for routine vaccination at the age of 11 or 12. Vaccination can be started as young as age 9.
- HPV vaccine is recommended for everyone through age 26 if not adequately vaccinated when younger.
- Vaccination is not recommended for anyone older than age 26.
- For adults ages 27 through 45 years, clinicians can consider discussing HPV vaccination with people most likely to benefit.

For the full text of CDC's ACIP recommendations, [click here](#).

## Talking points on COVID-19 vaccine safety and effectiveness

With an uptick of COVID-19 cases this winter, the emergence of a new [Omicron subvariant XBB1.5](#), and the persistent spread of COVID-19 misinformation on social media, the best way to counter false and misleading information is by continuing to share science-based facts. The data shows that vaccines have saved tens of millions of lives, are safe, and effectively preventing severe illness.



In addition to PHCC’s Misinformation Alert tracking tool, they’ve updated their [Talking Points on Vaccine Safety and Effectiveness](#) to help address vaccination misinformation in your community and underscore the importance of staying up-to-date on COVID-19 vaccination.

## Flu vaccine and COVID-19 boosters

Studies conducted throughout the COVID-19 pandemic indicate that it is safe to get both the flu and a COVID-19 vaccine at the same visit.

A [CDC study published](#) last summer showed people who got a flu vaccine and a COVID-19 booster vaccine at the same time were slightly more likely to have reactions including fatigue, headache, and muscle ache than people who only got a COVID-19 booster vaccine. Still, these reactions were primarily mild and went away quickly. The findings of this study are similar to safety data from clinical trials that did not find any safety concerns with giving both vaccines simultaneously. [Read more.](#)

To find COVID-19 vaccine locations near you, visit [vaccines.gov](https://www.vaccines.gov), text your ZIP code to 438829, or call Louisiana’s COVID-19 hotline at 855-453-0774.



## At-home COVID test available for free again this winter

The Biden administration is making rapid COVID tests available for free again this winter through a limited round of ordering. Households can now order four rapid COVID tests for free at [CovidTests.gov](https://www.covidtests.gov). Orders started shipping in December near the Christmas holiday, and deliveries will continue in January, according to the White House. The free at-home test program relaunch is part of the Biden administration's preparedness plan for COVID this winter. COVID infections are increasing again as hospital emergency departments are already battling a surge of patients sick with the flu and RSV. See more from CNBC [here](#).

