



## ***Prescriber's Letter* Helps Increase Immunization and Reduce Infectious Outbreaks**

September 14, 2007 – STOCKTON, CA – Infectious disease experts predict that failure to properly immunize Americans is putting us on the verge of more outbreaks. A significant factor is that many clinicians do not know the latest vaccination recommendations against contagious diseases.

For example, flu experts now recommend that children between 6 months and 8 years who received only one dose of flu vaccine in their first year of vaccination should receive a second dose before the 2007-2008 flu season. Children who have never been vaccinated against flu should receive TWO doses this year.

New recommendations affect protection against hepatitis A. The American Academy of Pediatrics now recommends that ALL children over 12 months get vaccinated. Children between 12 and 23 months need TWO doses.

Recent outbreaks underscore the need for adequate vaccination. Inadequate immunizations were thought to have contributed to the 2006 mumps outbreak in and around Iowa affecting thousands of people. Lack of proper immunization has also led to measles outbreaks in Indiana, Massachusetts, and other states in recent years.

A new special report from the editors of *Pharmacist's Letter* and *Prescriber's Letter* is intended to reduce infectious diseases by educating pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, and other providers to the latest recommendations.

Kristin Weitzel, PharmD, CDE, Assistant Editor says, “The recommendations in the new special report parallel the new policies of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). Our new *Pharmacist's Letter* / *Prescriber's Letter* report educates providers on immunization against influenza, meningitis, hepatitis, varicella, pertussis, and avian flu. The report is especially useful due to its clear explanations of the reasoning behind the updates. I expect providers to use it a lot since it provides details in easy-to-read format for future reference.”

In general, ACIP is now recommending more doses of vaccines for broader age ranges and groups of people. The meningitis vaccine (*Menactra*) had previously only been recommended for specific groups, including children 11 to 12 years of age, unvaccinated persons entering high school, and college freshmen living in dormitories. The narrow recommendation was due to a shortage of *Menactra*. With more vaccine available, ACIP now recommends immunizing all unvaccinated persons between the ages of 11 and 18 against meningococcal disease.

*Pharmacist's Letter* and *Prescriber's Letter* editors are making the special report available to any person who needs it, including pharmacists, physicians, nurse practitioners, physician assistants, school health personnel, educators, journalists, and parents. To get a free copy, go to [www.pharmacistsletter.com/newsroom/vaccines](http://www.pharmacistsletter.com/newsroom/vaccines) or [www.prescribersletter.com/newsroom/vaccines](http://www.prescribersletter.com/newsroom/vaccines).

## About Therapeutic Research Center

Therapeutic Research is a completely independent research and publishing organization that provides evidence-based information for physicians, pharmacists, and other medical professionals. Therapeutic Research publishes *Prescriber's Letter*, *Pharmacist's Letter*, *PL Journal Club*, *Natural Medicines Comprehensive Database*, *Ident-A-Drug Reference*, and a variety of continuing medical education courses including live courses. Therapeutic Research accepts no advertising and provides objective information for subscribers.

## Contact

Greg Tripp  
Web Editor  
Therapeutic Research Center  
Therapeutic Research Faculty  
3120 West March Lane  
Stockton, CA 95219  
Phone: 209-472-2244  
Fax: 209-472-2247  
<http://www.therapeuticresearch.com/newsroom>  
<http://www.pharmacistsletter.com/newsroom>  
<http://www.prescribersletter.com/newsroom>  
[greg.tripp@pletter.com](mailto:greg.tripp@pletter.com)

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