



PIC QUESTION OF THE WEEK: 2/14/11

Q: Have there been any recent revisions to the general immunization guidelines provided by the CDC?

A: The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) has just published its updated *General Recommendations on Immunization* from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices. This document provides important information on major aspects of vaccine use and is a critical document for all who administer immunobiologics. These general guidelines were last published in 2006. The following items include many of the key areas of revision. In addition, other issues of importance are included in the accompanying list. The reader is strongly encouraged to review the entire document included in the reference section of this issue of the PIC Question of the Week.

The revisions include:

- An updated table of contraindications and precautions to vaccination and an accompanying table outlining conditions often *mistakenly* considered contraindications or precautions for vaccination
- New order of information: sections covering vaccine risk-benefit screening, management and reporting of adverse events, and the vaccine injury compensation program (VICP) are now located after the discussion of contraindications and precautions
- More stringent guidelines for the selection of appropriate storage units for specific vaccines
- The report provides more information on maintaining the cold chain in the event of unavoidable deviations from ideal storage and transport temperatures
- Updates to vaccination guidelines for patients who have undergone hematopoietic cell transplant

Additional information can be found regarding:

- Directives on simultaneous administration of live and inactivated vaccines
- Specifications for needle length based on age and size of the patient
- Guidelines for vaccination in patients with altered immunocompetence or those receiving immunosuppressive drugs in patient with latex allergies
- Recommendations for vaccine administration during pregnancy and lactation
- Guidelines for immunizing patients previously vaccinated in other countries
- Various tables describing recommended administration schedules and figures demonstrating vaccination technique

For questions regarding specific vaccines, consult the individual ACIP recommendations.

References

- Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. General recommendations on immunization. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/pdf/rr/rr6002.pdf> Accessed February 2, 2011

Photo by: NathanF: used under Creative Commons License; <http://www.flickr.com/photos/nathanf/2196764544/> (Accessed February 2nd, 2011)

Rachel E. Werner and TrisAnn Rendulic, Pharm.D. Candidates

The PIC Question of the Week is a publication of the Pharmaceutical Information Center, Mylan School of Pharmacy, Duquesne University, Pittsburgh, PA 15282 (412.396.4600).