Back-to-the-Office Campaign

Resource Toolkit

Resource Toolkit for Advancing Wellness Preventative Care

New Jersey Chapter
INCORPORATED IN NEW JERSEY

American Academy of Pediatrics
DEDICATED TO THE HEALTH OF ALL CHILDREN®

New Jersey Immunization Network

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Louisiana Vaccine Alliance
Promoting Pediatric Wellness

Introduction:

The COVID-19 pandemic has altered how the Pediatric Medical Home cares for children and their families. Pediatricians have had to make adjustments to office processes and policies, such as scheduling, and modifying exam and waiting room areas to reduce the potential exposure and spread of COVID-19. Practices are monitoring and assessing the effects of these changes regularly and often adjust what they have done to meet current needs, limitations and evolving guidelines. We know that every practice is different and must decide when and how to safely open their offices to patients.

With guidance from the New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH), the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) the New Jersey Chapter, American Academy of Pediatrics (NJAAP) began offering guidance to its members and pediatricians throughout the state on ways to continue to safely care for their patients in the midst of the pandemic. The NJAAP has worked with NJDOH, Healthcare Systems and pediatricians statewide throughout the pandemic in order to provide flexibility and clarity around pediatric care and practice guidelines.

In a March 22, 2020 memo, the New Jersey Department of Health directed providers to transition all in-person healthcare to telehealth when medically appropriate and the same standard of care can be met as in a face to face visit. Governor Phil Murphy announced departmental actions from the Department of Human Services, Department of Banking and Insurance, Department of Treasury, Department of Health, Department of Children and Family Services and the New Jersey Division of Consumer Affairs to ensure New Jerseyans have access to telehealth and tele-mental health services to the greatest extent possible during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Governor directed departments to identify opportunities to support broader access to care, including: waiving of co-pays, permitting the use of telephonic telehealth and tele-mental health services, allowing patients to use services from the comfort of their own homes, increasing flexibility in the technological platforms used to deliver services and more. Governor Murphy signed legislation (A3860), which authorizes any health care practitioners to provide telemedicine and telehealth services for the duration of the public health emergency declared by the Governor.

“As we continue to strengthen our health care system to meet the medical demands of the COVID-19 pandemic, access to telehealth and tele-mental health services for New Jerseyans will be more important than ever before,” said Governor Murphy. “These actions will ensure that our most vulnerable residents have flexible access to vital health care services from the comfort and safety of their homes.”
On March 26, 2020, NJAAP published Guidance on Continuation of Well Child Visits During COVID-19 Pandemic. The guidance underscores the importance of well child visits, especially during the first 24 months of life, and offered suggestions for adjustments a practice may consider making to their usual clinical operations.

On April 1, 2020, the NJDOH published “Providing routine immunizations during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic” The New Jersey Department of Health (NJDOH) encourages healthcare providers to continue vaccinating patients whenever possible. Slowing or stopping access to immunizations increases our risk for vaccine-preventable diseases. Providers should review strategies to continue timely vaccination during the COVID-19 pandemic. www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID_Immunizations.pdf

On May 19, 2020, NJDOH Releases Guidelines on Resuming Elective Surgeries. Facilities shall establish a prioritization policy for providing care and scheduling of these procedures. Scheduling must be coordinated to promote social distancing: minimize time in waiting areas, stage appointment hours and post signs at entrances in appropriate languages about symptoms and precautions.

Patients should be counseled to self-quarantine following testing until the day of surgery. Facilities must have a process to screen patients for COVID-19 symptoms prior to scheduled procedures. To view the guidance for hospitals please visit: https://nj.gov/health/legal/covid19/5-19-2020_HospitalGuidance_forResumingElectives.pdf. To view guidance for ambulatory surgery centers please visit: https://nj.gov/health/legal/covid19/5-19-2020_ASCGuidance_forResumingElectives.pdf; cleanings, well child visits).

Guidance for reducing infection risk while conducting in-person well-child visits is available from the CDC (https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/hcp/steps-to-prepare.html) and guidance specific to vaccine administration during the COVID-19 pandemic is available from the NJDOH (https://www.nj.gov/health/cd/documents/topics/NCOV/COVID_Immunizations.pdf). Please continue to monitor NJDOH policies and professional organization clinical guidance, as updates and resources are subject to change as the pandemic response evolves.

This toolkit builds on the framework accomplished thus far and is meant to provide pediatricians with easy-to-use resources to reconnecting with families. NJAAP believes in the value and importance of the well child visits and the role preventative care has to keep children healthy.
Template Letter To Families

Providers can use the letter below as a customizable template to send to families encouraging them to return to the office for well child visits and vaccinations. Click here to download an editable version.

Hello from [Insert Practice Name]!

We hope that this note finds you and your family safe and healthy! We want to thank you for being flexible and understanding as we adjust office protocols to keep patients and families as safe as possible during this unprecedented pandemic.

Currently, stay at home orders from Governor Phil Murphy are in flux but our practice's safety policies for all healthcare visits remain intact. These changes allow us to increase our ability to keep our patients healthy. These steps include [insert changes made such as separate healthy/sick hours and rooms, triage in parking lot, telehealth, etc]. It is our goal to see every patient that needs our services in a safe and timely manner.

For patients who require an appointment for a “non-contagious” issue, please call our office to discuss the necessity of an in-person appointment. This includes wellness visits and visits for non-contagious infections. If it is safe and appropriate, appointments may be delayed or conducted through telehealth. If an in-person visit is necessary, please rest assured that we are taking extra precautions in cleaning of all equipment and examination rooms and limiting your contact with others.

For children ages 2 and under, it is especially important to maintain regularly scheduled well check appointments and stay up-to-date on immunizations despite the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic. Well child visits and vaccinations for young children are necessary to monitor early growth and help them build immunity to preventable diseases. If your child is behind on vaccinations or is due for a vaccine in the near future, please call our office to schedule an appointment. If you are unsure if your child is up to date or in need of a vaccine, please call and ask our office staff to check their record.

For patients who are sick and require an in-person visit, please call our office to schedule an appointment during sick-patient hours. We request that sick patients be accompanied by ONE healthy parent or guardian and, if possible, that no siblings be brought along to the office. If appropriate, we may avoid in-person visits and treat patients through telehealth.

We have developed the following protocols for sick visits: [discuss specific procedures for sick patients such as calling at arrival and remaining in vehicle until stay in car until you have further instructions, payment and forms online, etc.]
These measures are temporary and are in line with guidance from the CDC and NJDOH. Policies will be adjusted as needed to follow direction by NJDOH and the CDC. We believe that the policies discussed above will help to maintain the best health environment for all of our patients.

Sincerely
[Insert Practice Name]!

Communications Examples for Providers

Sample Messages for Staff to Call Parents:

On track vaccinations:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I am calling to touch base regarding your child’s wellness visit and vaccinations. It is very important to stay on track with these appointments, as missing them can lead to issues later down the road. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we are doing everything that we can to ensure the health and safety of our patients. Please give us a call if you have any questions or if there is anything that we can do for you. See you soon!”

Newborn appointments:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I am calling on behalf of everyone at (practice name) to congratulate you on the arrival of your baby. We are so thrilled for you and your family! As you may know, newborn checkups and on-time administration of vaccines are very important. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we encourage you to keep your scheduled appointments or schedule one if you haven’t already done so. Please let us know if you have any questions or if there is anything that we can do for you. See you soon!”

COVID-19:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I hope that you and your family are in good health and staying safe. I am just calling to let you know that all of us at (practice name) are thinking of you. We are here to support you during this unprecedented time. We have modified our practice policies to minimize our patients’ exposure to others. So please let us know if you have any questions or if there is anything else that we can do for your family. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we are still seeing patients in the office or by telehealth when appropriate, so if you have any patient care concerns, please let us know. We hope to see you soon!”
Sick-child visits:

“Hi! This is (name) from (practice). I am calling to share some news with you regarding the services that we are offering to our patients. Although the COVID-19 pandemic is ongoing, we are continuing to treat sick patients in a variety of ways. We are offering telehealth visits for concerns that can be treated virtually, or, if need be, in-person visits are available as well. For those children who need an office visit, we have modified our practice policies to minimize office exposure to others. Please don’t put off getting medical attention when your children need it. Give us a call if you have any questions or if there is anything that we can do for you. Take care!”

Sample Language for Social Media Posts:

The time is now!
Immunizations are key to maintain children's health. If your child is scheduled for a routine vaccination, don’t wait! Contact our office now!

Stay on track with vaccinations!
Washing your hands and social distancing help prevent COVID-19 and routine immunizations help prevent many other dangerous illnesses. Contact us to learn about available vaccination options.

Well child care is important, even during a pandemic.
Wash your hands often and contact us to discuss regular well child visit options.

Don’t delay! Even during social distancing, children need checkups.
Well child visits and routine immunizations are important, especially now. Children keep growing and it’s important that they stay on track with checkups and vaccinations. Contact us to see what checkup options are available.

We are here for you!
By phone, through telehealth or in person, we are here for you. Call us today to learn about what options are available for your child’s visits and vaccinations.
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Sample Images to use on social media. Click on each image to download.

**WELL CHILD CARE IS IMPORTANT, EVEN DURING A PANDEMIC.**

Wash your hands often and contact us to discuss regular well child visit options.

Even during social distancing, children need check ups!

Well child visits and routine immunizations are important, especially now. Children keep growing and it's important that they stay on track with checkups and vaccinations.

Contact us to learn about available check up options!

**THE TIME IS NOW!**

Immunizations are key to maintain children’s health. If your child is scheduled for a routine vaccination, don’t wait!

Contact us now to schedule your child’s appointment!

**Stay on Track with Vaccinations!**

Washing your hands and social distancing help prevent COVID-19 just like routine immunizations help prevent many other dangerous illnesses.

Contact us to learn about available vaccination options.
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**NJIN**
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**Don’t risk exposing your child to preventable diseases on top of COVID19!**
Call your pediatrician to find out if your child is due for any immunizations.

**LEARN MORE**

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**NJIN**
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**Schools will eventually reopen, so don’t delay.**
Schedule a well care visit today to ensure your child is ready when they do.

**LEARN MORE**

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**NJIN**
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**Concerned about taking your infant to the pediatrician?**
Ask about scheduling a ‘telehealth’ visit to discuss your worries.

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**NJIN**
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**The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program offers free vaccines to families who cannot afford to pay for their children’s vaccines.**

**LEARN MORE**

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**NJIN**
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**Contact your pediatrician to learn about the steps they have taken to keep your child and family safe during an office visit.**

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Promoting Adult Wellness

Routine Vaccination of High-Risk Adults during the Coronavirus Pandemic

As you know, all adults need certain vaccines to help protect themselves and those around them from common and serious diseases. However, factors such as age and specific health conditions put some of your adult patients at higher risk for diseases and complications than younger, healthier adults. Patients with chronic conditions like diabetes, heart disease, and lung disease are at increased risk of developing serious complications from vaccine-preventable diseases, including long-term illness, hospitalization, and even death. Therefore, the New Jersey Immunization Network strongly recommends that providers continue vaccinating high-risk adult patients during the COVID-19 pandemic. This prioritized group should also include women in their third trimester of pregnancy, adults who may need vaccinations due to occupational hazards, and adults engaging in behaviors that would put them at increased risk for contracting an infectious disease.

Health care providers can help ensure the safety of their high-risk adult patients when providing vaccinations during the COVID-19 pandemic by considering the implementation of the following precautions:

• Schedule patient visits so that sick patients arrive after the patients only needing vaccinations.

• If not able to separate the timing of patient visits, then take steps to separating patients spatially. Place patients with sick visits in different areas of the clinic or another location from patients with well visits.

• Establish different entrances in your clinic where sick and well patients may enter. Clearly mark entrances for patients considered to be at higher risk for COVID-19.

• Collaborate with providers in the community to identify separate locations for holding appointments for high-risk adults needing to be vaccinated.

• Generally lower the number of patients on site at any one time. Possibly close a waiting room or registration area and have patients check in by phone from the parking lot.

• Tell patients who are ill to use telemedicine or a phone call, thus not coming into contact with those seeking vaccinations at the clinic.
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- Tell patients to drive to the clinic and wait in their car, initially, while staff goes outside to check on them.
- Give vaccinations to patients seated in their car. Maintain proper hygiene and waste disposal practices outdoors just as you would indoors. Remember to follow all Storage and Handling safe practices.
- Screen all patients for high-risk symptoms.
- Refer high-risk adults to pharmacies who can give vaccines at less busy times to keep them safer.

As your adult patients’ most valued and trusted source of health information, you have the power to protect them from vaccine-preventable diseases. You should take every opportunity to discuss and help your high-risk adult patients get vaccinated during the pandemic to maximize their protection from common, preventable infectious diseases.

**Sample Language for Social Media Posts:**

**Even during social distancing, it’s important to vaccinate!**
Patients with chronic conditions are at increased risk of developing serious complications from vaccine-preventable diseases. Therefore, it’s important that high-risk adult patients continue with routine vaccinations, despite the COVID-19 pandemic. Contact your physician to see what vaccination options are available.

**Vaccines protect adults, too!**
Routine immunizations are key to keeping high-risk adults safe and healthy. If you are pregnant, have a chronic condition, or are concerned about exposure to infectious diseases, contact your physician to learn about vaccine availability.
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Sample Images. Click on each image to download

ADULTS NEED VACCINES, TOO!
Patients with chronic conditions are at increased risk of developing serious complications from vaccine-preventable diseases. Therefore, the Louisiana Immunization Program strongly recommends that high-risk adult patients continue with routine vaccinations, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

CHECK WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN IF YOU:
• Have a chronic condition such as diabetes, heart disease, and lung disease
• Are a woman in her third trimester of pregnancy
• Have relevant occupational hazards
• Engage in behaviors that would put you at increased risk of contracting an infectious disease

VACCINES PROTECT ADULTS, TOO!
Routine immunizations are key to keeping high-risk adults safe and healthy.

If you are pregnant, have a chronic condition, or are concerned about exposure to infectious diseases, contact your physician to learn about vaccine availability.

VACCINATIONS FOR HIGH-RISK ADULTS DURING COVID-19
Patients with chronic conditions are at increased risk of developing serious complications from vaccine-preventable diseases. Therefore, the Louisiana Immunization Program strongly recommends that high-risk adult patients continue with routine vaccinations, despite the COVID-19 pandemic.

Are you at High Risk
Check with your physician if you:
• Have a chronic condition such as diabetes, heart disease, and lung disease
• Are a woman in the third trimester of pregnancy
• Have relevant occupational hazards
• Engage in behaviors that would put you at increased risk of contracting an infectious disease

Adapting to Unprecedented Times
Physicians are making adjustments to usual clinic operations to best serve you!

CHECK WITH YOUR PHYSICIAN ABOUT AVAILABLE OPTIONS FOR ROUTINE VACCINATIONS.
SUPPORTING FAMILY HEALTH & WELL-BEING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

Amidst the COVID-19 outbreak, everyday life has changed significantly for families in New Jersey and we are all adapting to a new normal. Children and adolescents alike may need help maintaining a sense of structure with significant changes to their everyday routines (e.g. school closures, social distancing). Similarly, parents may find themselves in need of support to meet their family’s basic needs (e.g., food, shelter, clothing), or struggling to balance the demands of work, child care and self-care.

Please view the resources included below, and continue to check back as we update our website with new information and resources as they emerge.

New and updated information on COVID-19 is being published on a near constant basis. The best websites for up to date information include:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
The World Health Organization (WHO)
The New Jersey Department of Health
The New Jersey Chapter of The American Academy of Pediatrics
The New Jersey Immunization Network

Health and Healthcare

Information on where and how to donate blood:

AABB
America's Blood Centers
American Red Cross
Blood Centers of America
Miller Keystone Blood Center

EPA-Registered Disinfectants
State of New Jersey COVID-19 updates, testing locations, and resources
Mental Health

Get connected with teletherapy/mental health resources:

- American Counseling Association: Take Care of Your Emotional Health
- American Psychological Association: Ways to View Coverage of the Coronavirus
- Anxiety and Depression Association of America: Coronavirus Anxiety: Expert Tips and Resources
- Center for Disease Control: Stress & Coping
- Center for Disease Control: Taking Care of Your Emotional Health
- SAMSHA (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration): Tips for Social Distancing, Quarantine, and Isolation: Taking Care of Your Mental Health

Positive Parenting

Poster series on parenting in the time of COVID-19: To help parents interact constructively with their children during this time of confinement, these six one-page tips for parents cover planning one-on-one time, staying positive, creating a daily routine, avoiding bad behaviour, managing stress, and talking about COVID-19. Use them to your and your kids’ advantage, and have fun in doing so.

SPAN Advocacy Network Weekly 30-minute “Family Talk” chats: Join SPAN Parent Advocacy Network for open and honest conversations about how families are handling the challenges of COVID-19. Physical distancing, school closures, education, health and mental health issues — SPAN wants to hear your thoughts on these and other topics of concern to you. These weekly 30-minute chats take place on Tuesdays at 11:30 AM and 7:30 PM. Follow this link to join from your computer, tablet, or mobile device or call in by dialing +1 929 205 6099 and entering Meeting ID: 209 987 2673.

Education

Early Childhood Development Action Network COVID-19 resources are available for parents, early childhood workers, educators, administrators, and child protection practitioners. Some resources are available in Afrikaans, Arabic, Bahasa Indonesian, Chinese, French, Portuguese, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Xhosa. Parent-oriented materials share guidance on communicating with children about COVID-19, play and fun, homeschooling, helping children cope with stress, and more.
**Food and Housing**

SNAP and WIC programs adapted eligibility/application criteria

Single Stop: Single Stop’s benefits screener allows individuals to screen themselves for an array of public benefits that include food supports, tax credits and health insurance and provides information about how to apply or access those benefits in their area. As part of the screener, individuals can expect to receive information about public benefits for which they may be eligible and access to a COVID-19 New Jersey-specific fact sheet. Single Stop staff will also be available to support individuals who complete the screener in connecting them to additional supports from community partners.

**NJ211 IS NOW OFFERING LIVE ASSISTANCE FOR COVID-19:**

For general information/resources for basic needs, dial 211
To speak with a health care professional, you can call 1-800-962-1253
Text “NJCOVID” to 898-211 to receive texts with updates and alerts related to COVID-19

CPSC: CHECKLISTS FOR KEEPING YOUR HOME SAFE DURING COVID-19

During these times of uncertainty, you want your home to be a safe place for you and your loved ones. Especially now, when you are spending so much time indoors, you need to be able to identify and handle the hidden hazards in your home that can cause injury or death. Just as you are working to protect those you love from COVID-19, CPSC urges you to protect your family from these hazards as well.

CPSC continues to protect the public from dangerous consumer products through science, investigation, corrective action and communication. In response to the current crisis, CPSC has created a series of Home Safe Checklists, whether your home has babies, teens or seniors—or all of them. Print the lists that work for you, and spend a few moments checking off the safety items. When so much in the world seems beyond control, these checklists are simple, clear steps you can take for the safety of your family.

*Home Safe with Young Children*

*Home Safe with Older Children*

*Home Safe with Seniors*

*Home Safe for Everyone*

*Safety-Education/Safety-Education-Centers*