



## Department of Health

KATHY HOCHUL  
Governor

MARY T. BASSETT, M.D., M.P.H.  
Commissioner

KRISTIN M. PROUD  
Acting Executive Deputy Commissioner

December 13, 2022

Dear Colleagues,

Disease surveillance data suggest a tough winter ahead. We have recently reported pediatric deaths from influenza and COVID-19, including in otherwise healthy children who were unvaccinated. In addition, there are high rates of hospitalization for other respiratory viruses.

The good news is that for both influenza and COVID-19 there is a vaccine approved for children 6 months and older, including COVID [bivalent boosters](#). But far too few families are opting to vaccinate their children. I again ask for your help in ensuring that all eligible children presenting for care are offered vaccination against both influenza and COVID-19. These vaccines will help reduce morbidity and mortality – and help protect others who cannot be vaccinated.

Co-administration of COVID-19 and influenza vaccines is well-tolerated by children. Please encourage your patients to get both. And remember, for initial vaccination the immunity benefit will take a week or two. Now is the right time to get children vaccinated for the holidays. The new (smaller) minimum order [sizes](#) and the single dose vials are now available and make it easier for smaller practices to keep vaccines on hand.

If you are not enrolled in the program to receive COVID-19 vaccines, enrollment for providers is still open. Enrollment information is available here: [COVID-19 Vaccine Information for Providers | Department of Health \(ny.gov\)](#).

I deeply appreciate your hard work in providing care for our youngest New Yorkers. What you do makes an important difference in children's lives and in their families' lives.

Respectfully,

Mary T. Bassett, MD, MPH  
Commissioner of Health