Health Advisory Update #28: Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Vaccine Update

This health advisory updates providers about the newly authorized Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine, new guidance on COVID prevention, and additional groups eligible for vaccination.

Key Messages

- The Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) vaccine has received an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) and interim recommendations for use in the United States have been made.
- Providers should monitor the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Clinical Considerations webpage for frequently updated guidance on COVID-19 vaccination.
- The California Department of Public Health (CDPH) has authorized as eligible for vaccination individuals age 16-64 at the highest risk for morbidity and mortality from COVID-19 as a direct result of severe health conditions.
- CDPH provided updates and additional clarifications to groups eligible for vaccination.

Situation

- **Janssen (Johnson & Johnson) COVID-19 Vaccine**
  - On February 27, 2021, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) issued an Emergency Use Authorization (EUA) for the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine. For additional information see the Janssen COVID-19 Vaccine EUA Fact Sheet for Healthcare Providers.
  - The Janssen COVID-19 vaccine is a recombinant, replication-incompetent adenovirus serotype 26 (Ad26) vector vaccine requiring only a single dose and can be stored 36°F to 46°F (2°C to 8°C).
  - The vaccine was 72% effective overall and 86% effective in preventing severe disease among trial participants in the United States and there were no COVID hospitalizations or deaths in the vaccine arm.
  - The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) issued interim recommendations for this vaccine in persons aged ≥18 years for the prevention of COVID-19.

- **Vaccination Guidance**
  - CDC continues to update Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States.
    - Persons with a contraindication (i.e., anaphylaxis) to the second dose of a mRNA COVID-19 vaccine have a precaution for the Janssen vaccine because of potential cross-reactive hypersensitivity between ingredients. In this situation, the following actions could be considered:
      - Administering Janssen vaccine after the first dose of an mRNA vaccine to become fully vaccinated.
      - Consultation with an allergist-immunologist or CDC’s Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment (CISA) COVIDvax project should be considered.
- Vaccination of these individuals should only be undertaken in an appropriate setting under the supervision of a healthcare provider experienced in the management of severe allergic reactions.

**Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People**
- CDC released the new Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People and an accompanying Science Brief which apply to fully vaccinated people in non-healthcare settings.
  - People are considered fully vaccinated for COVID-19 ≥2 weeks after receiving the second dose in a 2-dose series (Pfizer or Moderna), or ≥2 weeks after receiving a single-dose vaccine (Janssen).
  - Fully vaccinated people may visit indoors without wearing masks or physical distancing with,
    - Other fully vaccinated people.
    - Unvaccinated people from a single household who are at low risk for severe COVID-19.
  - Fully vaccinated people should continue to take precautions in public like wearing a well-fitted mask, physical distancing, avoiding high risk situations and adhering to other prevention measures.
  - Fully vaccinated people who are not residents or employees of non-healthcare congregate settings (e.g., correctional and detention facilities, group homes) or employees of other high-density workplaces (e.g., meat and poultry processing and manufacturing plants):
    - Do not need to quarantine or be tested following an exposure to someone with suspected or confirmed COVID-19;
    - Should monitor for symptoms for 14 days following an exposure; and
    - Isolate themselves and be evaluated for COVID-19, if symptoms develop.

**Vaccine Allocation Updates**
- Medical and behavioral healthcare providers may use their clinical judgement to vaccinate individuals aged 16-64 who:
  - Are at the highest risk from COVID-19 because they have severe health conditions:
    - Cancer, current with debilitated or immunocompromised state.
    - Chronic kidney disease, stage 4 or above.
    - Chronic pulmonary disease, oxygen dependent.
    - Down syndrome.
    - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from solid organ transplant.
    - Pregnancy.
    - Sickle cell disease.
    - Heart conditions, such as heart failure, coronary artery disease, or cardiomyopathies (excludes hypertension).
    - Severe obesity (Body Mass Index ≥ 40 kg/m2).
    - Type 2 diabetes mellitus with hemoglobin A1c level greater than 7.5%.
  - Might be at increased risk as per the CDC, who are also eligible for vaccination in San Diego County:
    - Asthma (moderate-to-severe).
    - Cerebrovascular disease (affects blood vessels and blood supply to the brain).
    - Cystic fibrosis.
    - Hypertension or high blood pressure.
    - Immunocompromised state (weakened immune system) from blood or bone marrow transplant, immune deficiencies, HIV, use of corticosteroids, or use of other immune weakening medicines.
    - Neurologic conditions, such as dementia.
    - Liver disease.
    - Overweight (BMI > 25 kg/m2, but < 30 kg/m2).
    - Obese (BMI > 30 kg/m2, but < 40 kg/m2).
    - Pulmonary fibrosis (having damaged or scarred lung tissues).
- Thalassemia (a type of blood disorder).
- Type 1 diabetes mellitus.

- Have a developmental or other high-risk disability for which one or more of the following applies:
  - The individual is likely to develop severe life-threatening illness, or death, from COVID-19 infection; or
  - Acquiring COVID-19 will limit the individual's ability to receive ongoing care or services vital to their well-being and survival; or
  - Providing adequate and timely COVID care will be particularly challenging due to the individual's disability.

- Any currently authorized COVID-19 vaccine can be administered to people with underlying medical conditions who have no contraindications to vaccination. CDC's Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) has not stated a product preference.
  - Note that only Pfizer is indicated for persons including 16 and 17 years of age.
  - Individuals who reside or work in a high risk congregate residential setting, such as an incarceration/detention facility, homeless shelter, or behavioral health facility are now eligible. This includes people experiencing homelessness, who may transition into congregate settings at short notice.
  - Public transit workers, including airport and commercial airline workers (not private airplanes), are now eligible.

- Additional updates and clarifications by CDPH made the following groups eligible for vaccination:
  - Informal childcare workers, foster care, and those working in children's residential community care facilities, and library staff are part of education and childcare.
  - Utility workers, disaster service workers, and social workers are part of emergency response.
  - Massage therapists are alternative medical practitioners.
  - All janitors, because the vast majority support health care and other eligible sectors.
  - Couriers for vaccines and emergency supplies play a critical role in the public health response.

### Actions Requested

1. Become familiar with the Janssen COVID-19 vaccine including storage, dosing, and administration.
2. Vaccinate individuals aged 16-64 at the highest risk for COVID-19 complications due to health conditions as well as those who might be at elevated risk.
3. Monitor the list of eligibilities on the County's COVID-19 Vaccine Phases webpage as it is subject to change.
4. Verify age prior to giving vaccinations. Only the Pfizer vaccine is currently authorized for persons 16-17 years.
5. Remain up to date on CDC's Interim Clinical Considerations for Use of COVID-19 Vaccines Currently Authorized in the United States including the Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People.
6. Refer to the County's COVID-19 Vaccination Sites & Appointments page for additional information on eligibility, documentation, and scheduling vaccination.
7. Report vaccine-related adverse events and vaccine administration errors to the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), and to the County Epidemiology and Immunization Services Branch at IZINFO.HHSA@sdcounty.ca.gov or Fax: (619) 692-5677.
8. Strongly encourage vaccine recipients to enroll in V-safe for active monitoring.
9. Remain up to date on CDC’s Interim Public Health Recommendations for Fully Vaccinated People.

Thank you for your participation.

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