

May is National Hepatitis Awareness Month

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MDCH is encouraging providers to help families protect themselves from hepatitis by increasing their awareness of the disease. The most common types of viral hepatitis are [Hepatitis A](#), [Hepatitis B](#), and [Hepatitis C](#).

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) recently released "[Combating the Silent Epidemic of Viral Hepatitis](#)". This plan outlines actions for prevention and treatment of viral hepatitis. An estimated 3.5–5.3 million persons are currently living with viral hepatitis in the U.S., and millions more are at risk for infection. Because viral hepatitis can persist for decades without symptoms, 65%–75% of infected Americans remain unaware of their infection and are not receiving care and treatment. In the absence of treatment, 15%–40% of persons living with viral hepatitis will develop liver cirrhosis or experience other conditions that affect the liver, including liver cancer.

Recommendations include more education for providers regarding indications for screening, interpretation of diagnostic tests, and availability of effective treatments for HBV and HCV.

Additionally, only half of Michigan's births to hepatitis B surface antigen (HBsAg)-positive women are being identified according to CDC estimates. The importance of identifying these pregnant women cannot be overstated. Their babies are depending on us to protect them from hepatitis B. Health care providers need to be absolutely sure that their patients are tested for HBsAg for every pregnancy (Michigan Public Health Code, section 333.5123) and that all HBsAg-positive results are being reported (Michigan Communicable Disease Rules, Section 333.5111), even if the woman is chronically infected.

[Your Role in the Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program](#) provides a brief summary of the roles of health care professionals. The 2011 Perinatal Hepatitis B Prevention Program manual for providers is posted at www.michigan.gov/hepatitisb.

Additional resources:

- www.cdc.gov/hepatitis
- [Institute of Medicine Report](#)
- www.hbvadvocate.org
- www.hcvadvocate.org

More infants are being protected from pertussis in Ottawa County

Pertussis has been increasing in Michigan over the past few years. In 2010, there were more than 1,500 cases of pertussis in Michigan, including the death of an infant. In February 2010, a Michigan family lost their infant son to pertussis.

Whooping cough can be especially severe in young infants less than 6 months of age, who are at highest risk of severe illness, complications, and even death. A new initiative in Ottawa County promotes the concept of cocooning a newborn by encouraging the immunization of all family members interacting with a new baby.

Contributed by: Jennifer Hegel RN, BSN, Infection Control/Employee Health Coordinator, North Ottawa Community Health System

North Ottawa Community Health System (NOCHS) recently started an initiative to protect infants from pertussis by increasing Tdap immunizations in pregnant and new mothers. The initiative is focusing on patients within the health system's OB/GYN physician practice, North Ottawa Women's Health. A [consumer-friendly flyer](#) was developed and is now included in the office's prenatal packet, which is reviewed at the first OB appointment. Pertussis and the Tdap vaccine are also discussed in childbirth education classes at NOCHS. The new flyer is also distributed to new moms by inpatient nurses prior to discharge from the hospital. The flyer encourages all people who come into contact with newborns to receive the Tdap vaccine, especially family members.

Postpartum patients of North Ottawa Women's Health are now routinely offered the Tdap vaccine at their first check up after delivery.

In only one month, since starting the new initiative in March 2011, North Ottawa Women's Health has vaccinated 90 percent of their postpartum mothers!

For more information about pertussis

Pertussis information and resources can be found at: www.michigan.gov > Pertussis (Whooping Cough) in Michigan.

The Division of Immunization would like to thank NOCHS for its efforts to protect more babies in Ottawa County from pertussis.

New resources available to help providers talk with parents about vaccines

To help facilitate communication between health care providers and parents about vaccines, CDC, the American Academy of Pediatrics, and the American Academy of Family Physicians have developed a new web section called [Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations with Parents](#). It offers materials that can help providers talk with parents about vaccination, as well as fact sheets for providers and parents.

"[Talking with Parents about Vaccines for Infants](#)" is the most frequently downloaded resource for providers; this 4-page handout includes a number of communication strategies for successful vaccine conversations with parents and caregivers.

The Provider Resources for Vaccine Conversations with Parents web section is a work in progress, with many more materials planned for inclusion. Stay tuned!

Alternative immunization schedules

Vaccine Education Center Parents PACK Newsletter, March 2011

Q. Some of my patients want to use alternative immunization schedules. I would like to be able to recommend some resources to my patients regarding the pros and cons. Can you help?

A. Sure; we have addressed this in a few different places:

- [Altering the vaccine schedule](#)
- [Do vaccines overwhelm the immune system?](#)
- [The Problem with Dr. Bob's Alternative Schedule](#)
- [Too Many Vaccines: What You Should Know](#)

Several Q&A sheets about different aspects of vaccines and vaccine safety are available on the [Educational Materials](#) page of our website.

[Sign up for Vaccine Education Center newsletters](#)

Free online subscriptions are available for a number of e-newsletters from the Children's Hospital of Philadelphia.

HPV Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) updated

The two HPV Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) were updated on 5/3/11. Minor changes were made in these VIS to reflect the approval of quadrivalent HPV vaccine for prevention of anal cancer. Although recommendations for the vaccines' use have not changed, health care providers are encouraged to begin using the updated VIS immediately. The updated VIS are posted at www.michigan.gov/immunize.

In Michigan, it is important that vaccine recipients, their parents, or their legal representatives be given the Michigan versions of VIS because they include information about the Michigan Care Improvement Registry (MCIR). By state law in Michigan, parents must be informed about MCIR. Vaccine Information Statements that are obtained from other sources (e.g., from the CDC or IAC websites) do not contain information about MCIR.

The [Important VIS Facts handout](#) includes a table with the most recent published dates of the Vaccine Information Statements. It is important to use only the most up-to-date versions of the VIS.

[Register today for June 2 CDC web training](#)

Topics will include Vaccination of Persons with Altered Immunocompetence and Talking with Parents about Infant Immunization: Strategies and Tools. The webinar will be held from Noon - 1:00 pm. Early registration is encouraged, because space is limited and pre-registration is required. (Please note: An archived version will be made available.)

Measles update

Several dozen measles cases have occurred in the U.S. this year, including one to date in Michigan. In some instances outbreaks have resulted. MDCH reminds providers to be vigilant for this important preventable disease, especially among patients with a history of or connection to international travel. Several European countries are experiencing measles outbreaks. Suspected cases (prodrome of cough, coryza, and conjunctivitis with high fever, followed by macular-papular generalized rash) should be reported immediately to the local health department. More information on the recent measles situation involving returning U.S. travelers is available in the [April CDC Immunization Works newsletter](#).

A brief commentary offering guidance from CDC and Medscape on recognizing, diagnosing, and preventing measles is available at <http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/741206>.

Immunization in the news

- CDC released the [April issue of its Immunization Works newsletter](#)
- [New Pink Book now available](#)
- [Updated CDC Travel Health Book Released](#)
- The Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) released its [April issues of Needle Tips](#) and [Vaccinate Adults](#)

Healthy camp guidelines and sports physical form

The American Academy of Pediatrics recently published its revised guidelines in the [April issue of Pediatrics](#). The guidelines will help parents and summer camp staff ensure kids stay healthy and happy at summer camp. These recommendations are intended for parents, primary health care providers, and camp administration and health center staff. Guidance for the immunization of campers is included in the recommendations.

MDCH has posted a [flyer outlining the new guidelines](#) at www.michigan.gov/teenvaccines > Information for Pre-Teens/Teens and Their Parents.

Please feel free to share these materials with summer camp programs, schools, health care providers, and parents in your jurisdiction.

In other news, the Michigan High School Athletic Association (MHSAA) has updated its [sports physical form](#) and it now includes immunizations.

[Michigan's Immunization Timely Tips \(MITT\)](#)

Do you have anything you'd like to see included in an upcoming issue? We'd love to hear your suggestions! Tell us more by emailing Rosemary Franklin at franklinr@michigan.gov.

The Michigan Immunization Timely Tips newsletter is posted at www.michigan.gov/immunize under Provider Information.