



A CUP OF HEALTH WITH CDC

High Percentage Shots

National, State, and Local Area Vaccination Coverage Among Children Aged 19–35 Months — United States, 2007

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[Announcer] This podcast is presented by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. CDC — safer, healthier people.

[Dr. Gaynes] Welcome to *A Cup of Health with CDC*, a weekly feature of the MMWR, the Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report. I'm your host, Dr. Robert Gaynes.

Congratulations parents! The latest report of the National Immunization Survey shows that vaccination rates for children under three remain at record highs; seventy-seven percent of children received the recommended set of vaccines. Despite this good news, there's still work to be done.

Dr. Anne Schuchat is Director of CDC's National Center for Immunization and Respiratory Diseases. She's joining us today to discuss this report and the importance of childhood vaccinations. Welcome to the show, Anne.

[Dr. Schuchat] Thanks, Bob.

[Dr. Gaynes] Anne, what's interesting this year about coverage for individual vaccines?

[Dr. Schuchat] You know, there are two big changes this year. For the first time ever, we've reached the ninety percent mark for chicken pox vaccine coverage. The second piece of good news is that the coverage for pneumococcal conjugate vaccine has increased substantially. The pneumococcal conjugate vaccine prevents meningitis, blood stream infections, pneumonia, and ear infections, so a lot of infections that are important to parents. And the increase in coverage that we've seen helps us see that we're finally catching up after a period of vaccine shortage.

[Dr. Gaynes] What does the survey tell us about vaccination rates in particular groups?

[Dr. Schuchat] We didn't find any differences between racial and ethnic groups in vaccination series coverage. We have very good news among American Indians and Alaska Native children, with a big increase in coverage in the series of vaccines, as well as in individual vaccines. We still do see differences in vaccination coverage among children living in poverty, compared with other children, but the good news is that the poverty gap is narrowing substantially.

[Dr. Gaynes] So, all this sounds like good news for vaccination rates across the country, right?

[Dr. Schuchat] You know, it is good news, but we're still concerned that there are wide variations in coverage between states. It's really important that, in every state, we try to increase coverage to protect children.

[Dr. Gaynes] Measles has been eliminated in the United States, yet there have been some recent outbreaks. Anne, can you comment on that?

[Dr. Schuchat] You know, that's right, Bob. We're seeing more measles this year than we've seen in the past decade. In fact, we haven't had this much measles since 1996. It turns out, even though we are sustaining high levels of measles coverage at the national level, there can be lower coverage in particular communities. And our survey might miss that. Measles is extremely contagious and so unimmunized children are at risk wherever they are.

[Dr. Gaynes] What are the biggest challenges for getting children vaccinated?

[Dr. Schuchat] You know, the sheer numbers are the biggest challenges. There are twelve thousand babies born every day in the United States, and each one of them is susceptible to all sorts of vaccine-preventable diseases. It takes their parents, their providers, and their public health programs, all working together, to ensure that they're vaccinated and protected against these serious infectious diseases.

[Dr. Gaynes] Where can listeners get more information about childhood vaccinations?

[Dr. Schuchat] Listeners can go to www.cdc.gov/vaccines.

[Dr. Gaynes] Anne, thanks for sharing this information with our listeners today.

[Dr. Schuchat] Thanks so much, Bob.

[Dr. Gaynes] That's it for this week's show. Be sure and join us next week. Until then, be well. This is Dr. Robert Gaynes for *A Cup of Health with CDC*.

[Announcer] For the most accurate health information, visit www.cdc.gov or call 1-800-CDC-INFO, 24/7.