

Immunization, 2012

Immunization was one of the top ten “Great Public Health Achievements” of the 20th century, accounting for significant decreases in morbidity and mortality of infectious diseases and an overall increase in life expectancy.¹ Worldwide progress toward the eradication of key diseases such as smallpox and polio has been driven by immunization campaigns. However, many infectious diseases that can be prevented via vaccination continue to cause significant burdens of disease. The US CDC recommends immunizations for 17 vaccine-preventable diseases across the lifespan.² Young children, adolescents and older adults are populations for which the majority of vaccinations are recommended. Yearly influenza vaccination is recommended for all ages over six months.

- In both Maine and the United States, 72.7% of children ages 19-35 months had all of the recommended immunizations in 2010.
- 56.4% of adolescents ages 13-17 years had received a meningococcal vaccination, and 63.2% had received the recommended tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis (Tdap) vaccination, not significantly different from national rates. These adolescent vaccination rates have increased significantly since 2008, from 35.6% and 43.0% percent, respectively.
- Yearly influenza vaccination rates in 2010 ranged from 33.7% in adults ages 25-34 years to 72% in adults ages 65 years and older.
- 58.9% of children ages 0-17 had a flu vaccination in 2010.
- As of 2010, 71.8% of Adults ages 65 years and older are immunized for pneumonia, a rate that has not changed significantly since 2006.



Immunization measures chosen for the State Health Assessment include:²

- Annual flu vaccine for adults
- Annual flu vaccine for children ages 0-17 years old
- Pneumococcal vaccination for those 65 years old and older
- Meningococcal (MCV4) vaccination coverage for adolescents
- Tdap vaccination coverage for adolescents
- Vaccination coverage for children aged 19-35 months

Another indicator related to immunizations included in the State Health Assessment topic area of infectious disease is the rate of pertussis.

Due to sample sizes in the surveys used for the State Health Assessment immunization data, there is limited data on disparities for childhood and adolescent immunizations in Maine. For adults, influenza vaccination increased with age after age 24, and college and technical school graduates have higher rates than those with less education. Women are vaccinated for both flu and pneumonia at higher rates than men.

Healthy Maine 2020 objectives related to immunization are³:

- Reduce the rates of vaccine-preventable diseases (focus on Pertussis and Varicella)
- Increase routine vaccination coverage levels for children and adolescents

¹ Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Achievements in public health, 1900–1999: Control of infectious diseases. MMWR. 1999 Jul 30;48(29):621-9.

² Healthy People 2020, Immunization and Infectious Diseases available at: <http://www.healthypeople.gov/2020/topicsobjectives2020/overview.aspx?topicid=23#one> (accessed 9/26/13).

³ Maine Center for Disease Control and Prevention. Healthy Maine 2020. Available from: <http://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/healthy-maine/index.shtml>.