



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DIVISION OF EPIDEMIOLOGY, ENVIRONMENTAL AND OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH

PO BOX 369

TRENTON, N.J. 08625-0369

CHRIS CHRISTIE  
Governor

[www.nj.gov/health](http://www.nj.gov/health)

KIM GUADAGNO  
Lt. Governor

MARY E. O'DOWD, M.P.H.  
Commissioner

January 9, 2013

Dear School Administrators,

In the November 2012 Annual Immunization Status Report mailing, the New Jersey Department of Health (DOH), provided an update based on a more permissive Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendation for administering influenza vaccine to persons with egg allergies, i.e., per ACIP, most patients who report an egg allergy can safely receive flu vaccine.

The DOH has received numerous inquiries from school health officials and parents regarding vaccination of persons with egg allergies. The current ACIP recommendation includes an algorithm for healthcare providers to manage patients with egg allergies. Since egg allergies range in severity, school health officials may find it difficult to determine the validity of influenza vaccine medical exemptions.

Medical exemptions must be written in accordance with N.J.A.C. 8:57-4.3 which stipulates that a written statement must be provided from a physician licensed to practice medicine or osteopathy or an advanced practice nurse indicating that an immunization is medically contraindicated for a specific period of time, and the reason(s) for the medical contraindication, based upon valid medical reasons as enumerated by the ACIP.

After careful consideration, the DOH has made a decision to continue to accept egg allergy as a valid medical contraindication for the 2012-2013 school year. In other words, if the physician/APN's written medical exemption states that the child has an egg allergy and cannot receive flu vaccine for that reason, we would encourage schools to accept this as a valid exemption.

DOH will continue to evaluate the feasibility of implementing this ACIP recommendation in the future. In the interim, we continue to encourage healthcare providers to follow ACIP's guidelines and screening protocols to determine whether their patient can receive flu vaccine. For the complete ACIP 2012-2013 influenza recommendations, please visit [http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6132a3.htm?s\\_cid=mm6132a3](http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm6132a3.htm?s_cid=mm6132a3).

The DOH apologizes for any inconvenience this may have caused and appreciate your continued patience and cooperation. Please access the DOH, Vaccine Preventable Disease Program website for additional information on NJ's immunization requirements and frequently asked questions <http://www.nj.gov/health/cd/imm.shtml>. Should you require further assistance, please contact the Vaccine Preventable Disease Program at (609) 826-4861.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Barbara Montana MD".

Barbara Montana, MD, MPH, FACP  
Medical Director  
Communicable Disease Service

Revised 1/9/13