VAERS Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System
www.vaers.hhs.gov
(../index.html)

Information for Healthcare Providers

Safety monitoring in VAERS relies on receiving reports of vaccine adverse events from healthcare professionals. The following information provides guidance to healthcare professionals about how to submit accurate, complete and timely VAERS reports.

Guidance on Reportable Events

The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act (NCVIA) requires healthcare providers to report:

- Any adverse event listed by the vaccine manufacturer as a contraindication to further doses of the vaccine; or
- Any adverse event listed in the VAERS Table of Reportable Events Following Vaccination (../docs/VAERS_Table_of_Reportable_Events_Following_Vaccination.pdf) [PDF - 75KB] that occurs within the specified time period after vaccination.

In addition, CDC encourages you to report any clinically significant adverse event that occurs in a patient following a vaccination, even if you are unsure whether a vaccine caused the event.

Follow-up Requests from VAERS

It is very important that VAERS reports are filled out as completely and as accurately as possible. If

the CDC and FDA need additional information, you might be contacted by VAERS staff. These cases are usually serious adverse health events that require additional information, such as medical records, that will be helpful in better understanding the adverse event. Be sure to include the E-number or VAERS identification number when you send information back to VAERS. All records received by VAERS are kept confidential as required by law. (We do not recommend you send records by e-mail because email is not considered secure.) The patient's consent is not required to release medical records to VAERS. Under the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act of 1996 (HIPAA), VAERS is considered part of a public health activity, and CDC and FDA are public health authorities collecting this data, thus individual authorization is not necessary before releasing information. If you have questions about how the HIPAA applies to VAERS, please visit the VAERS Privacy Policies and Disclaimers section. (../privacy.html)

Vaccine Safety

CDC's Immunization Safety Office conducts post-licensure vaccine safety monitoring and research, and provides the public with information about vaccine safety. See http://www.cdc.gov /vaccinesafety/index.html (http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/index.html) for more information.

Frequently Asked Questions

Should we report vaccine errors to VAERS?

The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) accepts all reports, including reports of vaccination errors. VAERS is primarily for monitoring adverse health events, and we encourage reporting of clinically significant adverse health events following vaccination. Using clinical judgment, healthcare professionals can decide whether or not to report a medical error. For example, a healthcare professional might choose to report a vaccination error if the error might pose a safety risk (e.g., administering a live vaccine to an immunocompromised patient) or the error would be preventable with public health action or education.

Does VAERS have reporting deadlines?

Do we need to send multiple copies of the report to VAERS?

Will we receive confirmation that the report we filed was received?

When a patient has had a prior adverse event, how should we handle future immunizations?

How can we order more Vaccine Information Statements (VIS) or laminated vaccine schedules?

We have questions about vaccine storage. Where can we find information?

Is VAERS involved in the Vaccine Injury Compensation Program?

Where can I find a complete list of vaccines licensed for immunization and distribution in the United States?

VAERS is co-sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), agencies of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).