



Atlanta Children's Clinical Center, P.C.

September 23, 2024

To the patients and families of ACCC:

Fall seems to be upon us despite the warm weather lately. Hopefully, the school-aged children are settling into routines. With the cooler weather comes the beginning of respiratory season. You may have heard or experienced that we have been having an uptick of community acquired **pneumonia** among the school aged population. If your child has a prolonged cough or fever, please bring them in so we can evaluate them. The majority of these children are improving with oral antibiotics and sometimes inhalers and/or steroids for prolonged cough.

Fall allergies have kicked in as well. If you are not sure if it is **allergies** or illness, please bring them in. We can help ascertain the cause of their symptoms and treat them appropriately.

We have **flu shots**, **flumist**, and updated **covid** vaccines. The CDC recommends everyone 6 months of age and older receive a flu vaccine. Children over 2 who do not have asthma may receive the flumist if they can cooperate with a nose spray. Finally, we have the 2024/2025 updated covid vaccines as well for everyone over 6 mos of age. Those who have never been vaccinated get 2 doses at least one month apart. If they have received one or more doses of covid vaccine previously, they only receive one dose.

In October, we will also have the monoclonal antibody for **Respiratory Syncytial Virus** called **nirsevimab (Beyfortus)**. This injection medication is available for newborns and infants entering their first RSV season (Fall/Winter). Beyfortus is not a vaccine; it is a monoclonal antibody that will decrease the severity of RSV illness for your infant, greatly reducing the likelihood that they will be very ill or hospitalized. It is a costly medication (\$500-\$1000), so we are hopeful that insurance will be paying for it without cost sharing, but it is possible that they will not or put it toward deductible. Please ask us if you have questions.

We are also stocking the **pneumovax 23** vaccine for children who have chronic illnesses such as sickle cell disease, diabetes, other chronic illnesses that put them at risk for pneumococcal pneumonia. Every infant and toddler receives prevnar 20 to prevent 20 different serotypes of pneumococcus infection. However, some children with immune deficiencies are eligible for pneumovax 23 as well. Many of these patients are not very sick—they just have recurrent sinus infections and/or frequent respiratory illness that often responds to antibiotics. If you suspect your child falls into this category, please make an appointment to discuss. We can order laboratory studies that will help us determine if pneumovax 23 is an appropriate vaccine for your child to keep them healthy.

As always, we thank you for the privilege of taking care of your children.

Drs. Maxey, Chugani, & Ference