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Legacy Sees Dramatic Drop for Child Immunization Appointments in Wake of COVID-19 Pandemic

Pediatric Medical Director Dr. Tamisha Jones Sounds Alarm, Pleads with Parents of Infants to Adhere to Vaccination Schedule

HOUSTON (April 24, 2020) – With the increased anxiety from the novel coronavirus, including the economic shutdown and government restrictions on social gatherings, many parents are actively choosing to miss their child’s annual wellness exam. At [Legacy Community Health](#) clinics, annual checkups for children over 3 years old are projected to drop nearly 94% from pre-COVID rates. The projection for children two and under is currently estimated at 88%.

Ahead of National Infant Immunization Week, which is April 25-May 2, Legacy staff are actively reaching out to parents whose child is due or past due for an annual checkup so that their child or children can be vaccinated.

Earlier this month, Legacy announced redesigned operations for sick patients to help ease patients’ anxiety, including [a drive-thru for sick pediatric patients in need of lab testing](#).

“It’s deeply concerning that Legacy has seen such a dramatic drop in pediatric well-visits,” says Dr. Tamisha Jones, pediatric medical director at Legacy Community Health. “Parents need to know that viruses don’t take turns; even though we’re being very cautious to contain the spread of COVID-19, vaccinations against the many other diseases that can cause an outbreak is paramount.”

Vaccines have drastically reduced infant deaths and disability caused by vaccine-preventable diseases. Postponing early vaccines for babies and young children could create a vaccine gap and possibly expose a child to these diseases like measles, pertussis or pneumococcus.

For children older than 2 years, a delay in vaccinating may be fine in some cases. However, for children with special health conditions, or those who are behind on immunizations, waiting to vaccinate is not a good idea. Below is Legacy Community Health’s infant immunization schedule:

All babies should receive their first shot of Hepatitis B vaccine within 12 hours of birth. Between the first to second months of life, your baby should receive these vaccines to protect them from the following diseases:

- Pediatrx: combined [Hepatitis B \(HepB\)](#) (2nd dose), [Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough](#) (pertussis) (DTaP) (1st dose) and [Polio \(IPV\)](#) (1st dose)
- [Haemophilus influenzae type b disease \(Hib\)](#) (1st dose)
- [Pneumococcal disease \(PCV13\)](#) (1st dose)
- [Rotavirus \(RV\)](#) (1st dose)

At 4 months, your baby should receive vaccines to help protect against the following diseases:

- Pediatrx: combined [Hepatitis B \(HepB\)](#) (3rd dose), [Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough](#) (pertussis) (DTaP) (2nd dose), [Polio \(IPV\)](#) (2nd dose)
- [Haemophilus influenzae type b disease \(Hib\)](#) (2nd dose)
- [Pneumococcal disease \(PCV13\)](#) (2nd dose)
- [Rotavirus \(RV\)](#) (2nd dose) (Legacy gives a two dose series so a third dose isn't necessary)

At 6 months of age, your baby should receive vaccines to protect them from the following diseases:

- Pediatrx: combined [Hepatitis B \(HepB\)](#) (4th dose), Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (pertussis) (DTaP) and polio (3rd dose)
- Haemophilus Influenza type b disease (Hib) (3rd dose)
- [Pneumococcal disease \(PCV13\)](#) (3rd dose)

Starting at age 6 months, your baby should receive the flu vaccine for the first time. Between 12 and 24 months of age, your baby should receive vaccines to protect them from the following diseases:

- [Chickenpox](#) (Varicella) (1st dose)
- [Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough](#) (pertussis) (DTaP) (4th dose)
- [Haemophilus influenzae type b disease \(Hib\)](#) (4th dose)
- [Measles, mumps, and rubella \(MMR\)](#) (1st dose)
- [Pneumococcal disease \(PCV13\)](#) (4th dose)
- [Hepatitis A \(HepA\)](#) (1st dose)
- [Influenza \(Flu\)](#) (every year)

If you have questions or concerns about vaccinating your child during COVID-19 outbreak contact your child's Legacy pediatrician or provider to discuss your particular situation. For more information or to schedule an appointment, call 832-548-5000.

To set up an appointment through Legacy's Virtual Pediatric Clinic, new or established patients can call **(832) 548-5000** and follow instructions to see a provider. Health providers who speak Spanish or other languages are available.

Legacy also continues to offer adult and pediatric primary care and sick visits, HIV/AIDS care, OB/GYN services, free HIV and pregnancy testing, and virtual behavioral health services for adults and children. Locations and their hours of operation may change, but are always updated at www.legacycommunityhealth.org. Patients can also call **832-548-5000** with questions or to make an appointment.

Legacy accepts most HMOs/PPOs, Medicaid, Medicare and CHIP plans. Legacy also utilizes a sliding scale fee to lower the cost of services for uninsured patients.

About Legacy Community Health

Legacy Community Health (Legacy) is a full-service network of community medical clinics offering primary and specialty care to in the Texas Gulf Coast region. Services include adult primary care, pediatrics, dental care, vision services, behavioral health services, OB/GYN and maternity, vaccinations and immunizations, health promotion and community outreach, wellness and nutrition, and comprehensive HIV/AIDS care. With 35 locations across Houston, Baytown, Deer Park, and Beaumont, Legacy is the largest Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC) in Texas. Legacy has been a United Way-affiliated agency since 1990. To learn more, visit www.legacycommunityhealth.org.