

# Routine childhood vaccination rates down during the pandemic

October 7 2021

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(HealthDay)—As of September 2020, childhood vaccination rates were

lower than 2019 levels, according to a study published online Oct. 7 in *JAMA Pediatrics*.

Malini B. DeSilva, M.D., M.P.H., from the HealthPartners Institute in Minneapolis, and colleagues compared trends in pediatric vaccination before and during the pandemic. Children aged younger than 24 months, 4 to 6 years, 11 to 13 years, and 16 to 18 years were included over periods before the COVID-19 pandemic (Jan. 5 through March 14, 2020), during age-limited preventive care (March 15 through May 16, 2020), and during expanded [primary care](#) (May 17 through Oct. 3, 2020) and were compared to those enrolled in 2019 (1,402,227 and 1,399,708, respectively).

The researchers found that the age-limited preventive care period was associated with lower weekly vaccination rates compared with the pre-pandemic [period](#) and 2019, with ratios of rate ratios of 0.82, 0.18, 0.16, and 0.10 for those aged younger than 24 months, 4 to 6 years, 11 to 13 years, and 16 to 18 years, respectively. For most ages, vaccination rates during expanded primary care remained lower (ratios of rate ratios, 0.96, 0.81, and 0.57 for those aged younger than 24 months, 11 to 13 years, and 16 to 18 years, respectively). In September 2020, 74 and 57 percent of infants aged 7 and 18 months, respectively, were up-to-date (UTD) with vaccinations compared with 81 and 61 percent, respectively, in September 2019. Both during and prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the proportion UTD was lowest in non-Hispanic Black children across most age groups.

"Interventions are needed to promote catch-up vaccination, particularly focusing on populations in which disparities in vaccination coverage were evident prior to the [pandemic](#)," the authors write.

Several authors disclosed financial ties to the [pharmaceutical industry](#).

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Citation: Routine childhood vaccination rates down during the pandemic (2021, October 7)  
retrieved 11 February 2023 from <https://medicalxpress.com/news/2021-10-routine-childhood-vaccination-pandemic.html>

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