Merck HepB vaccine shortage to continue into 2019
by Melissa Jenco, News Content Editor

Supply of Merck's monovalent pediatric hepatitis B vaccine Recombivax HB will be limited until spring of 2019.

GlaxoSmithKline (GSK) has an adequate supply of hepatitis B vaccine to make up for the shortage, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). The company produces single-component Engerix-B and combination vaccine Pediarix.

Merck first announced a shortage in July 2017 citing demand and manufacturing process updates. It has pushed back its predicted availability several times and plans to allocate its supply to the CDC.

The CDC and the Academy continue to recommend routine vaccination against hepatitis B starting within 24 hours of birth for all healthy newborns with a birth weight of at least 2,000 grams, followed by doses at 1-2 months and 6-18 months.

During Merck's shortage, the CDC recommends prioritizing the birth dose and completion of the infant series over child and adolescent catch-up vaccination unless those patients are at risk for infection.

CDC guidance during the supply shortage is available at http://bit.ly/2QTkERS.

Hepatitis B is a liver infection transmitted through blood or body fluids that can be passed from a mother to her baby. The CDC estimates 90% of infected infants develop chronic infection.

Resources
- [CDC vaccine shortages website](#)
- [GlaxoSmithKline customer resource guide](#)
- [2018 Pediatric Hepatitis B Vaccine Supply Update and Guidance Table](#)
- [Information from the Academy on vaccine supply and shortages](#)
- [AAP Red Book section on hepatitis B](#)
- [Child and adolescent immunization schedule](#)