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“AMGA Immunizations Brief”—brought to you by the Rise to Immunize® (RIZE) campaign—delivers vaccine news and updates relevant to healthcare leaders. This brief provides concise, actionable information to help you stay informed and guide patient care in an evolving immunization landscape.

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At a Glance

- Dr. Nicole Saphier testified about vaccine safety at her nomination hearing for the position of U.S. Surgeon General.
- An Army physician has been assigned to review military COVID-19 vaccine safety reports.
- A new report found that states considered nearly 400 vaccine-related bills over the past year, including a growing number aimed at reducing reliance on federal vaccine recommendations.
- COVID-19 activity is elevated and increasing nationally, while seasonal flu activity remains low as the respiratory virus season begins.
- A new poll finds that Americans' trust in measles vaccines has declined.
- A new study assessed immunity to Hepatitis B among U.S. adults.

Detailed Brief

Dr. Nicole Saphier testified about vaccine safety at her nomination hearing for the position of U.S. Surgeon General.

- President Trump's nominee to serve as U.S. Surgeon General, Nicole Saphier, MD, testified at a nomination [hearing](#) held by the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee on Sept. 16.
- At the hearing, Saphier testified about vaccine safety, asserting the safety and efficacy of the MMR and hepatitis B vaccines and dispelling the idea that childhood vaccines cause autism.

An Army physician has been assigned to review military COVID-19 vaccine safety reports.

- Lt. Col. Theresa Long, an Army physician who has previously raised concerns about COVID-19 vaccine safety, disclosed in a deposition that she is [reviewing reports](#) of potential adverse

events among U.S. service members as senior military medical adviser to Health and Human Services (HHS) Secretary Robert F. Kennedy Jr.

- According to Long, the review includes approximately 55,000 adverse-event reports submitted to the federal Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) and 2,544 reports of deaths following COVID-19 vaccination among service members.
 - Of note, VAERS is an early-warning surveillance system that accepts reports of health problems occurring after vaccination; a report alone does not establish that a vaccine caused the event.
- Pentagon analyses released in [July 2025](#) and [March 2026](#) examined adverse events following COVID-19 vaccination among active-duty service members and found that most conditions studied were more strongly associated with COVID-19 infection, while vaccination was associated with a lower risk of several conditions.

A new report found that states considered nearly 400 vaccine-related bills over the past year, including a growing number aimed at reducing reliance on federal vaccine recommendations.

- A new [Association of Immunization Managers \(AIM\)](#) report found that states considered 374 vaccine-related bills with legislative movement between August 2025 and July 2026, 49 of which became law.
- Immunization requirements and exemptions remained the most common area of activity, with 84 bills seeking to reduce requirements or expand exemptions, compared with 18 seeking to strengthen requirements or narrow exemptions.
- Thirty-six bills sought to reduce states' reliance on the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), with several states instead giving greater weight to state health officials and medical organizations when setting vaccine policy, fourteen of which became law.

COVID-19 activity is elevated and increasing nationally, while seasonal flu activity remains low as the respiratory virus season begins.

- As of Sept. 9, COVID-19 infections were growing or likely growing in [35 states](#). On Sept. 11, national COVID-19 activity was found to be [elevated and increasing](#), although overall acute respiratory illness remains very low.
- As of Sept. 11, seasonal flu activity remains [low nationally](#), with little activity expected this early in the respiratory virus season.

A new poll finds that Americans' trust in measles vaccines has declined.

- A new [poll](#) by Reuters/Ipsos found Americans' trust in measles vaccines has declined, with 76% considering them safe for children, down from 84% in 2020.
- The U.S. is facing its worst measles outbreaks in decades, with more than 3,000 cases this year and vaccination rates falling to 92.5% among kindergarten children, below the 95% needed for herd immunity.

A new study assessed immunity to Hepatitis B among U.S. adults.

- A [study](#) published in *JAMA* found that only 27% of U.S. adults have evidence of immunity to hepatitis B, and that patients most at risk with underlying conditions did not have higher rates of vaccination compared to healthy peers.
- Importantly, 40% of adults under age 50 have immunity to hepatitis B, likely due to universal childhood vaccination beginning in the 1990s.