



It was wonderful to see so many ACP members, including our new IM Residents and WWAMI students, at the annual Chapter Meeting on September 26–27. We enjoyed updates on metabolic health, harm reduction, palliative care, climate change, atrial fibrillation, and COPD, and took a deep dive into the development of Alaska's first-in-the-nation rural residency track.

We were delighted to celebrate Dr. Gail Pokorney, MD, FACP, as an ACP Chapter Laureate in honor of her tremendous efforts in launching the AK IM Rural Residency. It was an honor to have Dr. Eileen Barrett, recent Chair of the ACP Board of Regents, join us to help with our Chapter Strategic Planning and deliver a talk on Harm Reduction. Dr. Barrett, who was a Residency Preceptor for Dr. Pokorney in Gallup, NM, brought things full circle with stories from her time as the area's first resident rotator.

We would like to take a moment to congratulate our newly elected Fellows for 2025. Fellowship in ACP is a recognition of dedication to the profession and commitment to excellence in internal medicine. Congratulations to Eric N. Stewart, MD, FACP and Megan U. Roosen-Runge, MD, FACP!

I also want to extend my gratitude to Dr. Emily Barkay (Church) for her service to the Chapter during her Governorship through the COVID era. She graciously attended our strategic planning session while leaving her one-week-old at home.

Early feedback on the 2-day format, the new fall timing, and the opportunities to connect with colleagues has been very positive. If you have

any questions about CME from the meeting you can contact us at [acpalaskachapter@gmail.com](mailto:acpalaskachapter@gmail.com). I hope you will plan to join us for next fall's meeting!



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## Vaccines in Alaska

Alaska has a unique history with vaccine-preventable diseases, and it is helpful to consider this context as we navigate vaccination discussions today. Smallpox epidemics devastated many coastal communities in the 1830s and 1860s, with mortality rates up to 70% of the population. The 1918 influenza pandemic hit Alaska Native communities particularly hard; in Brevig Mission, 72 of 80 residents died in a five-day period. The Iditarod Race was inspired by the 1925 effort to deliver diphtheria antitoxin to sick children in Nome. Alaska was also an early site for Hepatitis B vaccine trials in the 1980s.

With Changes at the CDC, it can be difficult to find adult vaccination schedules - here is a link to the schedule from early 2025, before the ACIP was disbanded. <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/imz-schedules/downloads/adult/adult-combined-schedule.pdf>

As vaccines remain a hot topic, especially given the current political climate, ACP has put together some vaccine-related information for members that we have included below.

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**Kristin Mitchell, MD, FACP**  
Governor, Alaska Chapter  
American College of Physicians

From ACP

## Supporting You in Vaccine Science and Patient Care: ACP's Adult Immunization Resource Hub

ACP remains committed to supporting internal medicine physicians and their patients by advancing evidence-based immunization practices. From developing rigorous recommendations, to advocating on behalf of public health, to equipping members with practical tools, ACP is leading efforts to ensure patients are protected and physicians have the resources they need.

### Clinical Recommendations

ACP's Population Health & Medical Science Committee is in the process of developing immunization recommendations for influenza, COVID-19, and RSV using ACP's established, rigorous [clinical policy development process](#). Recommendations will be released sequentially, starting with influenza and followed by COVID-19 and RSV.

### Advocacy

ACP is alarmed by the actions that Robert F. Kennedy Jr. as U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services and the Trump administration have taken to cast doubt on vaccines, restrict access to vaccines, and contribute to confusion and misinformation about vaccines. ACP has called for the [removal of Secretary Kennedy from office](#) in concern for the health and well-being of Americans. ACP [filed a lawsuit](#) against Secretary Kennedy along with other medical organizations to stop the assault on public health. ACP has raised

concerns about the [turmoil at the CDC putting lives at risk](#), spoke against HHS [pulling mRNA vaccine research](#), urged Congress to reinstate and support the [traditional functioning of ACIP and its role, committee members, and activities, and to provide rigorous, bipartisan oversight](#) of the recent changes at CDC as well as to the vaccine infrastructure. ACP also [spoke against](#) the plans to end vaccine mandates in Florida. ACP will continue to advocate strongly and use its organizational voice to speak out on behalf of our patients and public health.

## Resources

- [Unpacking Consequential Discussions at ACIP Meeting on September 18 and 19, 2025](#): ACP President Jason Goldman, MD, ACP's liaison to the ACIP committee, explains the Evidence to Recommend framework, and elaborates on discussions surrounding the Hepatitis B and MMRV vaccines.
- Watch the ACP/Annals Forum: "[Vaccines: Decision Making Amid Conflicting Recommendations](#)" which addresses confusion regarding vaccination recommendations and the duration of vaccines' respective protection.
- [Practical resources](#) to address the spread of medical disinformation and misinformation.
- ACP's [Adult Immunization Hub](#) will continue to be updated with resources and information.

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## Vaccines: Decision Making Amid Conflicting Recommendations

### *Eligible for CME Point-of-Care*

Vaccinations are among the most impactful of all public health interventions—protecting not only the vaccinee but also those around them. When polio vaccines were introduced, people clamored to receive them to avoid polio-related death and disability. Influenza vaccines have prevented countless lost days from school or work, hospitalizations, and deaths. Hepatitis B vaccines can prevent serious complications, including chronic liver damage and hepatocarcinoma. Some deadly infections such as smallpox have been virtually eliminated by vaccines. Yet in the United States, vaccination has become a political lightning rod instead of a foundational component of public health. [Read More](#)

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## New Blood Pressure Guidelines Issued

New Blood Pressure Guidelines have been issued for the first time in eight years by the American Heart Association and the American College of Cardiology. Click [here](#) for more information.

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## ACP Releases New Online Modules on Continuous Glucose Monitoring

ACP's new free online program focused on the latest Continuous Glucose Monitoring (CGM) technology helps members advance their diabetes management skills. Explicitly designed for ACP members, this two-part series offers practical insights for integrating CGM into treatment plans for patients with type 2 diabetes.

The CGM content includes:

- Tips on selecting and using the right CGM device based on patient needs and medications
- Strategies for shared decision-making to support better glycemic control
- Interactive case studies that translate theory into real-world clinical practice
- Insurance and billing guidance to improve patient access to CGM

**Members can also earn CME credit while gaining actionable skills to improve diabetes outcomes.**

Start the program today - [Continuous Glucose Monitoring | ACP Online](#)

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## Free Affiliate Membership in the American Medical Women's Association

Did you know that your ACP membership includes free affiliate membership in AMWA?

This is a great benefit for ACP members to tap into resources for physicians and trainees, including discounted [leadership programs](#), [advocacy](#) (that

complements your ACP advocacy!), [committee leadership](#), [peer recognition/awards program](#), and [other opportunities to accelerate your career](#). If you are already an FACP, you may be eligible through a fast track for [Fellowship in AMWA](#). Check out more details and sign up [here](#).

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## Save Big On Your Next Getaway With ACP!

ACP is excited to debut a new member benefit that makes rest and recreation more accessible. ACP's Travel & Entertainment Discount Program offers **member-exclusive pricing** on everything from hotel stays and car rentals to amusement parks, concerts, and local attractions. Wherever your plans take you, your member benefits follow. Visit [acponline.org/go](https://acponline.org/go) to save **\$250 annually!**\* \*Actual savings may vary depending on travel dates, destinations, availability, and individual usage.