

Chief Health Officer alert

5 April 2012

Status: Active

Influenza vaccine reminder

The Department of Health has recently received the following advice from the Commonwealth Chief Medical Officer regarding influenza vaccination for children:

- Providers are reminded that Fluvax[®] is not registered for use in children under 5 years of age in Australia and should not be given in this age group due to an increased risk of febrile convulsions.
- The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommends the use of Fluarix[®] and Vaxigrip[®], for children between 6 months and 10 years of age eligible for immunisation under the National Immunisation Program. If necessary, providers should contact their State or Territory Health Department for supplies of Fluarix[®] and Vaxigrip[®].
- Children between 6 months and 10 years who are **not** eligible under the NIP may also use Influvac[®] and Agrippal[®].
- All influenza vaccines may be used in anyone aged 10 years or over.
- Providers should also note that there may be a small increase in the risk of fever and febrile convulsions with the co-administration of trivalent influenza and pneumococcal conjugate vaccines in children 12-35 months of age. These vaccines may still be given together but providers should discuss this small risk with parents prior to vaccination. If the vaccines are given separately, there should be at least an interval of three days between each vaccine.

Recommendations for the use of 2012 seasonal influenza vaccine by brand and age group

Age group	Fluvax [®]	Vaxigrip [®]	Fluarix [®]	Influvac [®]	Agrippal [®]	Intanza [®]
≥6 months to 5 years	X	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
>5 years to <10 years*	Note 1	✓	✓	✓	✓	X
≥10 years	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓	Note 2

Note 1: The use of *Influvac*, *Vaxigrip*, *Fluarix* or *Agrippal* in children aged 5 years to less than 10 years is strongly preferred, however, *Fluvax* may be used when no timely alternative vaccine is available and parents are informed of the potential increased risk of fever.

Note 2: Do not use in children under 18 years of age (approved for adults aged 18-59 years only).

For further information, see Immunise Australia website www.immunise.health.gov.au.



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