

Childhood flu programme

Information sharing Hounslow and Richmond
Community Healthcare – September 2017

Background

- ▶ Following a recommendation in 2012 by the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) that the annual influenza vaccination programme should be extended to include all children aged two to under 17 years of age,
 - ▶ In the 2014/15 flu season, influenza vaccine was offered to all two, three and four year old children.
 - ▶ Influenza vaccine has been increased in the last few years to cover school pupils in school years 1, 2 and 3
 - ▶ This year in school all children Reception class , year 1, 2, 3 and 4 will be offered this same nasal vaccine in school.
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Why vaccinate children

- ▶ Reduce the risk of flu transmission particularly to those in the clinical risk.
 - ▶ providing direct protection to children, thus preventing a large number of cases of flu in children
 - ▶ Extending the flu vaccination programme to all children aims to lower the public health impact of Influenza
 - ▶ Studies in pilot areas show reductions
 - ▶ 94% reduction in primary children visiting GP with flu like symptoms,
 - ▶ 74% reduction in A/E attendance due to respiratory conditions.
 - ▶ 59% decrease in adults attending GP with influenza like symptoms
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Benefits to your students and school

- ▶ Protecting the child from what can be a very unpleasant illness
- ▶ Reducing the chance of others in the family, the school (including teaching staff) and those at greatest risk in our wider communities from contracting influenza.
- ▶ Reducing sickness rates thereby improving attendance and learning for both staff and children. The disruption of sickness in staff and pupils has a big and disruptive impact at this young age as well as being costly to have substitute staff.
- ▶ Providing opportunities to incorporate wider health messages into the curriculum and across the school community including healthy awards programme <http://healthyschoolslondon.org.uk/about/school-awards>
- ▶ Staff should also be reminded and encouraged to have the influenza vaccine – especially if planning a family or have young children or elderly at home.

What is flu & its possible complications

- ▶ Flu is a highly infectious, acute, viral infection of the respiratory tract.
- ▶ Transmitted by the inhalation of infected droplets and aerosols and by hand-to-mouth/eye contamination from an infected surface.
- ▶ The incubation period can be 1–5 days (average 2–3 days).
- ▶ There are three types of influenza virus.
 - ▶ **A** causes epidemics and pandemics.
 - ▶ **B** tends to cause less severe disease and smaller outbreaks.
 - ▶ **C** causes minor respiratory illness only.
- ▶ Higher risk to babies, pregnant women, older people and those with certain underlying conditions.

Higher risk of complications

- ▶ What are the symptoms of Influenza?
- ▶ In healthy individuals, flu is usually an unpleasant but self-limiting illness with recovery in five to seven days.
- ▶ sudden onset of fever/ chills
- ▶ Headache,
- ▶ Myalgia (muscle aches)
- ▶ Severe fatigue.
- ▶ Dry cough, sore throat and stuffy nose.
- ▶ In young children, gastrointestinal symptoms such as vomiting and diarrhoea may be seen.
- ▶ **Common complications**– may include bronchitis, otitis media, sinusitis. Other less common complications include secondary bacterial pneumonia, viral pneumonia, meningitis and encephalitis.

Nasal flu vaccine

- ▶ JCVI recommend in England all children aged 2, 3 and 4 years on the 31 August 2016 and of school year 1, 2 & 3 age should be offered the live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV) Fluenz Tetra®
- ▶ This should be offered to children aged between 2 and 18 years in clinical risk groups unless contraindicated
- ▶ **Note it Should not be given should not be given to**
 - A child or adolescent who: is under 24 months or 18 years or older
 - History of a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of flu vaccine
 - Confirmed anaphylactic reaction to any component of the vaccine
 - Clinically severely
 - high dose corticosteroids
 - or currently taking or has been prescribed oral steroids in the last 14 days
 - is receiving salicylate therapy
 - is pregnant

Precautions to nasal flu vaccine

- ▶ The live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV Fluenz Tetra®) is not recommended for children and adolescents with severe asthma or active wheezing,.
- ▶ Vaccination should be deferred in children with a history of active wheezing in the past 72 hours or increased their use of bronchodilators in the previous 72 hours. If their condition has not improved after a further 72 hours then, to avoid delaying protection in this high risk group, these children should be offered an inactivated flu vaccine.
- ▶ If a child is acutely unwell, – we will be doing a mop up of these young people can do immunisation may be postponed until they have fully recovered. However, minor illnesses without fever or systemic upset are not valid reasons to postpone immunisation.
- ▶ Children with egg allergy? JCVI has advised that, ‘except for those with severe anaphylaxis to egg which has previously required intensive care, children with an egg allergy can be safely vaccinated with Fluenz Tetra® in any setting (including primary care and schools).’
- ▶ **Children with a history of severe anaphylaxis to egg which has previously required intensive care, should be referred to specialists for immunisation in hospital.**

How is the vaccine administered

- ▶ Story books are available and short films to help little ones understand the process at an appropriate level
- ▶ The nurse explains what is being done in a simple way such as '*it feels like a rain drop touching your nose*'
- ▶ A nurse gently squirts a tiny drop of vaccine into each of the child's nostrils
- ▶ The child is not required to sniff or tip their head backwards – this is more likely to give them watery eyes

How does it work

- ▶ The virus in the Fluenz Tetra[®] vaccine is cold adapted
- ▶ A cold adapted virus is designed not to reproduce well at body temperature (37°C). So it will not replicate in the lungs but will reproduce at the cooler temperatures found in the nose (nasal mucosa).
- ▶ This allows the child to produce antibodies which then protect against infection. These antibodies work in the lining of the airways and are not produced in response to the inactivated flu vaccine. By limiting viral reproduction to the nose, the worst symptoms of flu are avoided.
- ▶ Fluenz Tetra[®] provides greater protection for children than inactivated flu vaccine. By using a live attenuated vaccine, more elements of the immune system are involved including the production of IgA, a T-cell response and cell mediated immunity.
- ▶ Since commencing this programme millions of doses of Fluenz were given to children in the UK and no significant adverse reactions were reported.

Q&A

- ▶ What happens if the child sneezes, blows their nose or has nasal dripping following administration? Administration of the dose does not need to be repeated. Binding of the virus to epithelial cells occurs very rapidly and there are more virus particles in the vaccine than are needed to establish immunity. Therefore sneezing or blowing the nose immediately after immunisation with Fluenz Tetra[®] will not affect immunity the vaccine will still be effective if any of these occur.
- ▶ What happens if half of the vaccine dose cannot be given e.g because it is accidentally squirted into the child's eye? The vaccine may cause some slight irritation. Normal saline should be used to wash out the eye. The child/parent should be advised to seek medical advice if any irritation occurs and persists beyond what might reasonably be expected. It is not necessary to repeat the dose of vaccine as long as at least 0.1 ml of the vaccine has been given intranasally, even each half dose (0.1 ml) contains enough viral particles to induce an immune response .

More Q&A's

- ▶ Does Fluenz Tetra® contain latex? The Fluenz Tetra® vaccine is supplied in a single use nasal applicator (type 1 glass) with nozzle (polypropylene with polyethylene transfer valve), nozzle tip-protector (synthetic rubber), plunger rod, plunger stopper (butyl rubber) and dose divider clip, none of which should affect latex sensitive individuals.
- ▶ Does Fluenz Tetra® contain any preservatives such as thiomersal? No – does not contain any preservatives, such as thiomersal.
- ▶ Does Fluenz Tetra® contains ingredients that come from pork ? The nasal flu vaccine contains hydrolysed gelatine derived from pork as one of its additives. Gelatine is commonly used in a range of pharmaceutical products, including many capsules and some vaccines. The gelatine used in Fluenz Tetra is a highly purified product used to stabilise live viral vaccines.
- ▶ How long after receiving Fluenz Tetra® does it take for a child to acquire protective immunity levels? It takes about two weeks for the body to acquire full protection. This is why it is best to offer vaccination as early as possible in the flu season before flu viruses start to circulate.

Can certain Faiths have this vaccine

- ▶ This statement from representatives of the Jewish community may help some patients/parents/carers to reach a decision about having the vaccine: Rabbi Abraham Adler from the Kashrus and Medicines Information Service, said: “It should be noted that according to Jewish laws, there is no problem with porcine or other animal derived ingredients in non-oral products. This includes vaccines, including those administered via the nose, injections, suppositories, creams and ointments”.
 - ▶ We acknowledge that some groups within the British Muslim community may consider the porcine product to be forbidden. In this circumstance, the individual would be unable to accept many pharmaceutical products unless there was no suitable alternative and/or the product was considered life-saving.
 - ▶ Respect the beliefs of others & keep information shared confidential
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Possible side effects

- ▶ What are the potential side effects of Fluenz Tetra®?
- ▶ Nasal congestion/runny nose,
- ▶ reduced appetite,
- ▶ weakness and headache
- ▶ common adverse reactions following
- ▶ As with all vaccines, there's a very small chance of a severe allergic reaction anaphylaxis. The overall rate of anaphylaxis after vaccination is around one in 900,000 (so slightly more common than one in a million).

Before the nurse attends

- ▶ Consent forms sent out with envelope with child's name
- ▶ We check and return a list of students will be returned prior to the day
- ▶ Confidentiality – if a parent has written private or confidential – please leave for the immunisation team to open
- ▶ Timings organised by school
- ▶ Risk assessment sheet to be completed by school with – Key staff members contact details, appropriate area established, hand washing facilities, etc
- ▶ **100% forms returned**

Preparing the children

- ▶ Posters up
- ▶ Invite school nurses in if doing health projects
- ▶ Show fun flu film before the event and again on the day
<http://www.nhs.uk/video/Pages/flu-heroes-nasal-flu-spray-for-kids.aspx>

Further information

- ▶ https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/614527/Flu_advice_for_headteachers.pdf
- ▶ [General infection control in schools](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-control-in-schools-poster)
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/infection-control-in-schools-poster>
- ▶ For other support or advise contact
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