



# GET THE FLU SHOT BEFORE THE FLU GETS YOU

## Flu shot available now Vaccination provider fact sheet

- Influenza vaccination is strongly recommended for anyone who is > six months of age at increased risk of influenza and its complications.
- Influenza vaccine under the National Immunisation Program (NIP) will be available from April 2016.
- Two **age-specific quadrivalent influenza vaccines** — one for children from six months to under three years of age, and one for people aged three years and over — will be available free of charge to eligible people under the NIP.

This document provides recommendations on the use, where not contraindicated, of seasonal influenza vaccines that are available **free to eligible people under the National Immunisation Program** in 2016. Additional advice on the use of influenza vaccines can be found in The *Australian Immunisation Handbook* 10th edition and in the Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) advice for immunisation providers regarding the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2016, both available at [www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)

### PEOPLE ELIGIBLE FOR FREE INFLUENZA VACCINE UNDER THE NIP

Under the NIP, the following people are eligible to receive free influenza vaccines:

- pregnant women
- people aged 65 years and over
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people aged
  - six months to less than five years, and
  - 15 years and over
- people aged six months and over with medical conditions predisposing them to severe influenza, namely:
  - cardiac disease, including cyanotic congenital heart disease, congestive heart failure and coronary artery disease
  - chronic respiratory conditions, including severe asthma, cystic fibrosis, bronchiectasis, suppurative lung disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease and chronic emphysema
  - chronic neurological conditions that impact on respiratory function, including hereditary and degenerative central nervous system diseases (including multiple sclerosis), seizure disorders, spinal cord injuries and neuromuscular disorders

- immunocompromising conditions, including immunocompromised due to disease or treatment (e.g. malignancy, transplantation and/or chronic steroid use), asplenia or splenic dysfunction, and HIV infection
- diabetes and other metabolic disorders
- renal disease, especially for chronic renal failure
- haematological disorders, including haemoglobinopathies
- children aged six months to 10 years on long term aspirin therapy.

### 2016 NATIONAL IMMUNISATION PROGRAM INFLUENZA VACCINES

This year, two age-specific quadrivalent influenza vaccines (QIVs), which contain four strains of influenza virus will be available free of charge to eligible people under the NIP. The two vaccines are:

- *FluQuadri Junior*® (Sanofi Pasteur) for children from six months to under three years of age.
- *Fluarix*® *Tetra* (GSK) for people aged three years and older. *Fluarix*® *Tetra* vaccine is **not registered for use in children under three years of age and must not be given in this age group, even as a half dose.**

*Before administering a flu vaccine, CHECK you have the correct vaccine for the person's age.*

## INFLUENZA VACCINATION IN CHILDREN

Children can begin to be immunised against the flu from six months of age. Children aged eight years and under require two doses, at least four weeks apart in the first year they receive the vaccine. While two doses in the first year are recommended, one dose does provide some protection and is preferable to receiving no doses. One dose of influenza vaccine is required in subsequent years and for children aged nine years and over.

Please note that Seqirus (previously bioCSL) *Fluvax*<sup>®</sup> is not a registered influenza vaccine for use in children less than five years of age and must not be given in this age group. Seqirus *Fluvax*<sup>®</sup> is not available under the NIP in 2016.

## DOSES FOR CHILDREN AND ADULTS

All influenza vaccines available in Australia are presented in pre-filled syringes, of either 0.25 mL or 0.5 mL, for intramuscular injection.

*FluQuadri Junior*<sup>®</sup> (Sanofi Pasteur) for children from six months to under three years of age is presented in a 0.25 mL pre-filled syringe.

*Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> *Tetra* (GSK) for people aged three years and older is presented in a 0.5 mL pre-filled syringe.

If a child aged less than three years inadvertently receives the 0.5ml *Fluarix*<sup>®</sup> *Tetra* (or other 0.5ml influenza vaccine), no immediate action is necessary. Report the vaccine brand to the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register (ACIR) and the vaccine error to your state and territory health department.

If a child aged three year and over, or an adult inadvertently receives a 0.25ml dose of *FluQuadri Junior* (or other 0.25ml influenza vaccine), an age appropriate dose (0.5ml) should be repeated as soon as practicable. Any additional dose(s) required that season should be given following standard recommendations. The vaccine brand should be reported through ACIR for those aged up to 20 years. Report the vaccine error to your state and territory health department.

## REPORTING INFLUENZA VACCINATION TO THE ACIR

From 1 January 2016, the ACIR began accepting vaccination information from all children, adolescents and young adults under the age of 20 years (expanded from under 7 years of age). Annual influenza vaccine doses administered to this age group should be reported to the ACIR.

Please report all influenza vaccines given to children up to 20 years of age, including off-license or incorrect or inadvertent administrations.

## FACT SHEET

Flu Season 2016

## ADVERSE EVENTS FOLLOWING IMMUNISATION

Notification of adverse events following immunisation at any age should be through the usual reporting mechanisms in your state or territory.

There may be a small increase in the risk of fever when a child receives both the flu vaccine and the pneumococcal vaccine (Prevenar 13) at the same time. These two vaccines can be given separately, with at least a three day interval between them to reduce the likelihood of fever.

## QUADRIVALENT (QIV) INFLUENZA VACCINE OR TRIVALENT (TIV) INFLUENZA VACCINE?

The Australian Technical Advisory Group on Immunisation (ATAGI) recommends the use of QIVs in preference to TIVs (three strain vaccine), as the additional influenza B virus that it contains confers additional protection. However, TIVs are an acceptable alternative, as TIVs are expected to protect against the majority of circulating influenza viruses in most seasons. Therefore, if a QIV is not available in a timely manner, an age appropriate TIV (only available on the private market) should be given.

ATAGI advises that, for individuals who only need one dose in 2016 and have already received a TIV this year, a further dose of QIV is **not recommended**, however it is not contraindicated.

## VACCINE DELIVERY

Your state or territory health department will deliver 2016 NIP influenza vaccines from April 2016. You can administer the vaccine to eligible people as soon as it is available to you.

## FURTHER INFORMATION AND CONTACTS

ATAGI provides detailed advice for vaccination providers regarding the administration of seasonal influenza vaccines in 2016. The ATAGI advice is available at the Immunise Australia website ([www.immunise.health.gov.au](http://www.immunise.health.gov.au)).

Further information is available in *The Australian Immunisation Handbook* also available at the Immunise Australia website.

You can also order resources about the 2016 NIP influenza vaccine at the Immunise Australia website.

State and territory health department contact numbers:

ACT: 02 6205 2300

NSW: 1300 066 055

NT: 08 8922 8044

QLD: 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84)

SA: 1300 232 272

TAS: 1800 671 738

VIC: 1300 882 008

WA: 08 9321 1312

All information in this fact sheet is correct as at 22 March 2016 and valid for the 2016 influenza season.