

Community Medicine Newsletter

Update about the 2013-2014 Influenza Vaccine Program

Fall is here and while we are not yet seeing influenza activity, we are gearing up to launch the annual influenza vaccination campaign. In VCH, physicians administer the majority of influenza vaccine and we appreciate your support. While the provincial campaign launch date is the week of November 4th, we plan on distributing vaccine to North Shore Physicians at Lions Gate Hospital on October 22nd, see notice attached. As you are well aware, vaccine distribution is contingent on products arriving on time and as such, the distribution date could change. Please start immunizing as soon as you receive vaccine.

Eligibility: Influenza vaccine is recommended for everybody. It is provided free for those at high risk of influenza complications, those in contact with people at high risk (including health care workers), and essential community service providers. People at high risk of influenza complications include children 6 months- 5 years, pregnant women, seniors 65 and older, and person of any age (>6 months) with underlying health conditions including obesity. Influenza vaccine is safe and recommended for pregnant women in all stages of pregnancy. New this year, visitors to a health care facility are also eligible for free influenza vaccine.

Publicly Funded Flu Vaccines Include Fluviral (53% of our supply), Flud (30%), Agriflu (12%) and Flumist (5%).

Flumist is the intranasal spray vaccine that was piloted in VCH last year. Flumist was chosen by the majority of parents over the traditional flu shot; this vaccine was also preferred by immunizers because of ease of administration. As Flumist is preferentially recommended for children 2-17 years of age, we hope you will offer the nasal spray vaccine to your younger patients. Flumist is a live vaccine and is contraindicated in immune compromised individuals, severe asthmatics who are on inhaled or oral steroids or in egg-allergic

individuals. Flumist and other live vaccines (MMR and varicella) can be administered on the same day or need to be separated by four weeks.

Flud is available for seniors ≥ 65 years. Fluviral (multi-dose vial) and Agriflu (single, pre-filled syringe) can be offered to everybody (≥ 6 months of age).

Egg Allergic Individuals: Several trials have confirmed the safety of influenza vaccine in individuals with egg allergy. As a result, many allergists are no longer offering influenza vaccination clinics for individuals with anaphylactic allergy to eggs. Last year, a two step immunization procedure was recommended for individuals with severe egg allergy. This has been revised to a one-step full dose immunization in a medical facility using 0.5 mL of an inactivated vaccine.

Flud Effectiveness Study: This two year observational study is now complete and final results are pending. Preliminary year 2 results support effectiveness of Flud in preventing influenza illness in the elderly.

Vaccine Packing and Storage: Increasing package sizes of vaccines remains an important consideration. Fluviral is still available in a multi-dose vial. Agriflu & Flud are packaged in a pre-filled syringe (ten doses in one large box). Flumist is also packaged in a pre-filled applicator for intranasal spray (ten doses per box).

Expansion in the One-Time Bivalent HPV Vaccine (Cervarix) Eligibility Criteria

HPV vaccination program using Cervarix previously for women born in 1991-1993 birth years has now been expanded to include women up to the age of 26 years (1987-1993). Please continue to offer this vaccine to eligible patients. Additional doses of free Cervarix will not be available once the vaccine runs out. This product is not approved for use in men. Women born in 1994 and younger are eligible for free Gardasil.

Sincerely,



Brian A. O'Connor, MD, MHSc
Medical Health Officer

Vancouver Coastal Health, North Shore

2013-14 Seasonal Flu Vaccine Pick-up Depot Day

Date/ Time:	Tuesday October 22, 2013	8:00am-12:30pm
Site:	<u>Lions Gate Hospital Foyer (in front of Dogwood Shop)</u> 231 E 15th Street, North Vancouver	
Required supplies	<p>To ensure cold-chain is maintained for the vaccines, please bring:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A hard-sided cooler for transport (or 2 coolers if you have a large order) 2. A cool-water insulating blanket (for each cooler) 3. An ice pack per cooler (optional if the transport time to a refrigerator is under 20 minutes) 	

For 2013/2014:

PRODUCT	FORM	CLIENTS
Fluviral	10 doses per multi-dose VIAL	Adults <65yrs and babies 6months-23 months
Agriflu	10 SYRINGES per package	Adults <65yrs (& Thimerosal allergic individuals)
Fluad	10 SYRINGES per package	Seniors 65+ yrs
Flumist	10 spray syringes per package	Children 2-17 years

You are not required to collect all of your annual order on pick-up Day.

After Oct. 22 you can collect additional flu vaccine via your regular vaccine pick-up site.

Increased volume: Size of product packaging may impact your abilities to both **transport** and **store** vaccine, please bring appropriate sized coolers.

To Collect:

- 1 **Check-in:** Confirm the Physician/Practice name and order details
 - For GROUP practices, orders will be by the last name of the index/ primary MD named for the practice.
- 2 **Pick-up:** vaccine allocation based on your order and space available in cooler(s).

Note:

- **New Physicians and/or Clinics:** Contact VCH Public Health [ph: 604-983-6784](tel:604-983-6784) to arrange flu vaccine order
- Detailed product information can be found at www.bccdc.ca in the immunization manual