



**MINISTRY OF HEALTH**  
SINGAPORE

MH 34:03

19 May 2011

All Registered Medical Practitioners  
All Licensees of Healthcare Establishments

**MOH CIRCULAR 11/2011**  
**INFLUENZA VACCINATION FOR PERSONS AT INCREASED RISK FOR**  
**INFLUENZA-RELATED COMPLICATIONS AND STAFF IN MEDICAL CLINICS**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Ministry of Health recommends that persons at higher risk for complications from influenza be vaccinated against influenza. We also recommend that all medical practitioners and their staff who come into contact with patients or patient specimens be vaccinated as well.

**INDICATIONS FOR INFLUENZA VACCINATION**

2. Influenza vaccinations are indicated for persons aged 65 years and older children aged six months to five years, as well as priority groups. Household contacts and caregivers for persons at high risk for influenza related complications should also be vaccinated. The list of priority groups for influenza vaccination is at [Annex A](#).

3. Annual influenza vaccination is generally sufficient to protect an individual against influenza. However, when there are differences in composition between the Northern and Southern Hemisphere vaccines, vaccination with the latest formulation will give better protection against circulating strains.

**WHO RECOMMENDATIONS ON THE COMPOSITION OF THE 2011-2012**  
**NORTHERN HEMISPHERE INFLUENZA VACCINE**

4. The World Health Organization (WHO) has recently published its recommendations for the composition of influenza vaccine for use in the Northern Hemisphere (NH) influenza season<sup>1</sup>. It is recommended that the vaccines for use in the 2011-2012 NH influenza season contain the following:

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<sup>1</sup> World Health Organization. Recommended composition of influenza virus vaccines for use in the 2011-2012 northern hemisphere influenza season February 2011. Available at <http://www.who.int/csr/disease/influenza/vaccinerecommendations/en/index.html>



- an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like virus;
- an A/Perth/16/2009 (H3N2)-like virus;
- a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus.

5. However, as there is no difference in composition between the above recommendation and that recommended in the 2011 Southern Hemisphere (SH) influenza vaccine, persons who have already been vaccinated with the SH 2011 seasonal influenza vaccine need not receive the NH 2011-2012 seasonal influenza vaccine.

6. The NH 2010-2011 vaccine last year also had an identical composition. However, WHO has advised that annual vaccination is still recommended as the duration of protection, especially for high-risk groups is uncertain.

7. For clarification of this circular, please email [moh\\_info@moh.gov.sg](mailto:moh_info@moh.gov.sg).



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## **PRIORITY GROUPS FOR INFLUENZA VACCINATION**

### **PERSONS AT INCREASED RISK FOR INFLUENZA-RELATED COMPLICATIONS**

- Persons aged 65 years and older;
- Children aged six months to five years;
- Adults and children who have chronic disorders of the pulmonary or cardiovascular systems, including asthma;
- Adults and children who have required regular medical follow-up or hospitalisation during the preceding year because of chronic metabolic diseases (including diabetes mellitus), renal dysfunction, haemoglobinopathies or immunosuppression (including immunosuppression caused by medications or by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus);
- Children and teenagers aged 6 months to 18 years who are receiving long-term aspirin therapy and therefore might be at risk for developing Reye syndrome after influenza infection;
- Women in the second or third trimester of pregnancy.

### **PERSONS WHO LIVE WITH OR CARE FOR PERSONS AT HIGH RISK FOR INFLUENZA-RELATED COMPLICATIONS**

In addition, to prevent transmission to persons identified above, influenza vaccination is recommended for the following persons, unless contraindicated:

- Healthy household contacts and caregivers of children aged five years and below and persons at high risk for severe complications from influenza;
- Healthcare workers.