



## Influenza Flu Kit Update #2

Due to multiple messages regarding flu vaccine this year we would like to clarify the following points:

### How many doses of influenza vaccine should children have this year?

- All children aged less than 9 years are recommended to have **two doses** of influenza vaccine for 2010. Note that this differs from the influenza vaccine data sheets and the Immunisation Handbook 2006. Younger children have a better immune response after two doses of the 2010 seasonal influenza vaccine because they are more likely to be immunologically naive to the H1N1 strain.

#### Immunisation Technical Forum (ITF) recommendations 2010

Age	Dose	Number of doses
6-35 months	0.25ml	2*
3-8 years	0.5ml	2*
≥ 9 years	0.5ml	1

\*Two doses separated by at least four weeks if vaccine is being used in children under 9 years of age (for 2010 only).

### Should children under 5 years still receive the influenza vaccine?

- The Ministry of Health continues to recommend that children at risk of complications from influenza get immunised with either VAXIGRIP® (made by Sanofi) or INFLUVAC® (made by Solvay) brands of influenza vaccine.
- Fevers are known to occur after flu vaccines, and febrile convulsions are a recognised complication of fever. Please ensure febrile convulsions following influenza vaccination are reported to CARM.

### What is the new Eligibility Criteria for free vaccination for 2010?

- The Ministry of Health has extended free influenza vaccination to more **children aged 6 months to under 5 years**, for 2010 only. General practices can now use their discretion to offer free flu immunisation to children who they consider are likely to get sicker than others if they get the flu or from high deprivation backgrounds. Children with certain chronic conditions are already eligible – as per previous years' recommendations.
- The factors that the College of General Practitioners (RNZCGP) suggest you can use to identify high risk children include "Maori or Pacific ethnicity, being from areas of deprivation (quintile 5), living in crowded housing, requiring high use of primary and secondary care for recurrent illness, having respiratory conditions, being poorly nourished, or being exposed to passive smoking in the home." (ePulse V12 number 13, 2010).
- Morbidly obese** individuals (BMI of  $\geq 35$  in individuals aged 18 years and over)
- Pregnant women** – The seasonal influenza vaccine has historically been given in the second and third trimesters but should also be offered to women who will be pregnant in their first trimester when influenza is circulating. Information brochure for pregnant women: [http://www.influenza.org.nz/site\\_resources/Influenza/Influenza%202010/Information\\_for\\_Pregnant\\_Women.pdf](http://www.influenza.org.nz/site_resources/Influenza/Influenza%202010/Information_for_Pregnant_Women.pdf)

Thank-you, your support contributes to keeping our communities healthy by reducing influenza disease.

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