監測及流行病學處

衞生防護中心
Centre for Health Protection
保障市民健康
Protecting Hong Kong's health

Surveillance
And
Epidemiology
Branch

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Dear Doctor,

Seasonal Influenza Vaccines (2010/11)

We would like to update you on some recent developments which might help address patients' questions about seasonal influenza and influenza vaccination.

The seasonal influenza vaccine 2010/11 (Northern Hemisphere winter) comprises an A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like virus; an A/Perth/16/2009 (H3N2)-like virus; and a B/Brisbane/60/2008-like virus as recommended by the World Health Organization (WHO). The A/California/7/2009 (H1N1)-like virus component corresponds to the human swine influenza (HSI) virus which was also used in the 2009 HSI vaccine.

Recently, there has been a report in the journal *Eurosurveillance* on the emergence of a genetic variant of the HSI virus which contains several signature amino acid changes in both the haemagglutinin (HA) and neuraminidase (NA) genes. You may wish to note that mutational changes in influenza gene segments are to be expected as influenza virus evolves over time, but the reported signature changes in the HA and NA proteins have not resulted in significant antigenic changes which might make the current vaccine less effective. Locally, our Public Health Laboratory Services Branch of the Centre for Health Protection is continuously monitoring the influenza viruses and has not detected antigenic changes so far.

In September 2010, the Centre for Health Protection (CHP) published a detailed report on the safety of HSI vaccine summarizing the global data and literature as well as local experience. The full report can be accessed at CHP's website at http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/hsi_vaccine_aefi_report_en.pdf . The following points emphasized by the WHO are especially pertinent:

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- More than 570 million doses of HSI vaccines were distributed and over 350 million doses administered around the world.

- WHO concluded that the safety profile of HSI vaccine has been reassuring and is no different from the traditional seasonal influenza vaccine. The risk of Guillain-Barre syndrome (GBS), if any, appears to be no greater than has been reported previously for seasonal influenza vaccines.

For further information regarding 2010/11 seasonal influenza vaccinations, please refer to the "*Frequently Asked Question on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine*" (http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/IVP_eng_20090722.pdf) and the "*Scientific Committee on Vaccine Preventable Diseases ---- Recommendations on Seasonal Influenza Vaccination for the 2010/11 Season*" (http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/recommendations_on_seasonal_influenza_vaccination_for_the_2010_11_season_eng.pdf). Full prescribing information is also displayed in the product insert of individual vaccine brands.

If you encounter an adverse event following immunization (AEFI) in respect of seasonal influenza vaccine, please report to the Adverse Drug Reaction (ADR) Monitoring Unit under the Pharmaceutical Service of Department of Health. The ADR reporting form and guidance notes could be found at the Pharmaceutical Service website (http://www.psdh.gov.hk/eps/webpage.jsp).

Yours sincerely,

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for Controller, Centre for Health Protection
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衞生防護中心乃衞生署轄下執行疾病預防及控制的專業架構
The Centre for Health Protection is a professional arm of the Department of Health for disease prevention and control

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