

Sanofi-aventis Seasonal Influenza Vaccine (SIV) Q&A

1) What would be the impact on health if I received affected SIV?

According to Sanofi-Aventis, the affected batch of vaccine was made in France and there is currently no evidence that its quality, safety or efficacy is affected or poses a safety risk to individuals received the vaccine. There is no report received regarding “white particles” in the same batch of quadrivalent influenza vaccines supplied to in Hong Kong.

However, the pharmaceutical company decided to take precautionary measure immediately, including suspending launch of the affected batch of vaccines to the market and instead supplying other batches to public or private medical institutions before a comprehensive investigation report is completed by the French headquarters.

If there is no discomfort after influenza vaccination, the public needs not be over concerned.

If you experience discomfort after influenza vaccination, please consult your doctor.

2) I already received this season’s influenza vaccine. How do I know if that vaccine belonged to the affected batch?

According to initial investigations, the batch of vaccines was manufactured in France and there is currently no evidence that its quality, safety or efficacy is affected or poses a safety risk to the individuals received the vaccine.

As different SIV from different pharmaceutical companies are available in Hong Kong, individuals who would like to know whether he/she has received affected SIV can check with the health care personnel who performed the vaccination.

3) Are students who received SIV under the “School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme” affected?

No. SIV used in the “School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme” was supplied by another vaccine manufacturer.

(Note: Under the “Enhanced Vaccination Subsidy Scheme” (EVSS), SIV are provided by doctors/organisations for schools. If you would like to know more about the vaccine batch used, you may contact the relevant EVSS schools or doctors for more details.)

4) If I have not received influenza vaccine this season, should I proceed now?

As a precautionary measure, the affected batch of influenza vaccines has now been suspended from using. If you have not received influenza vaccine this season, please proceed to vaccination as soon as possible.

5) Will the Government recall the affected SIV?

The Department of Health (DH) is in close communication with Sanofi Aventis Pharmaceuticals. DH has informed medical professions to suspend the use of affected SIV until further notice.

SIV which does not belong to the affected batch can be vaccinated.

6) If I wish to temporarily withdraw from the “School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme”, will there be any rearrangement to receive SIV?

SIV used in “School Outreach Vaccination Pilot Programme” are supplied by a manufacturer and is therefore not affected. There will be no mop-up arrangement by the Department of Health. Parents may consider bringing their children to the family doctor's clinics for vaccination.

7) Did Hong Kong import the affected trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine (TIV)?

The Department of Health has contacted Sanofi-Aventis Hong Kong (pharmaceutical company) and was informed that Hong Kong did not import the affected batch of TIV.

8) Do citizens who have been vaccinated by the affected batch have to receive vaccination again?

The Department of Health has not received reports of any particles found in the quadrivalent seasonal influenza vaccines (QIV) imported into Hong Kong. Although the QIV is from the same batch, we have not received an investigation report from the pharmaceutical company, and there is no evidence to suggest that the safety or effectiveness of the vaccines are compromised.

9) Have relevant clinics under Department of Health (DH) and Hospital Authority (HA) resumed seasonal influenza vaccination services?

Yes, all relevant clinics under DH and HA have resumed vaccination with other batches of unaffected vaccines since 3 December 2018.

10) I received seasonal influenza vaccination through the outreach activity this season. How can I find out if I received vaccination from the affected batch?

If you would like to know the batch of the influenza vaccine you received, please check with the organizer or doctor/medical organization responsible for the outreach vaccination activity you attended.

11) I received seasonal influenza vaccination at the Hospital Authority (HA) clinics this season. How can I find out if I received vaccination from the affected batch?
If you received vaccination at a HA clinic, please check with the clinic or call their hotline at 2300 6028.