

Communications Office

Peterborough County-City Health Unit
10 Hospital Drive
Peterborough, ON K9J 8M1
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391
www.pcchu.ca



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Public Health Agency of Canada Makes Second Dose Recommendations for Children

Health Unit to Offer Second Dose of H1N1 Vaccine to Children Under 3 and Those Under 9 with Chronic Conditions

Monday, November 16, 2009, Peterborough

Based on recommendations provided by the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC) and the Canadian Pediatric Society (CPS), the Peterborough County-City Health Unit is now providing a second dose of the H1N1 vaccine to eligible children.

All children aged 6 months to 3 years should receive two 0.25 ml doses of the H1N1 vaccine at least 21 days apart. There is no urgency in the timing of the second dose – as long as there is a minimum interval of at least 21 days between the two vaccination dates.

Children 10 years and older will continue to require only one 0.5 ml dose of the H1N1 vaccine.

However, for children aged 3 to 9 years who have chronic medical conditions, the recommendation based on expert opinion is that those children should receive a second dose. This includes children who are at higher risk of complications of H1N1 influenza, as well as children whose immune response may be compromised. Chronic conditions for children include:

- cardiac or pulmonary disorders (including bronchopulmonary dysplasia, cystic fibrosis and asthma);
- diabetes mellitus and other metabolic diseases;
- cancer, immunodeficiency, immunosuppression (due to underlying disease and/or therapy);
- renal disease;
- anemia or hemoglobinopathy;
- conditions that compromise the management of respiratory secretions and are associated with an increased risk of aspiration; or
- children and adolescents with conditions treated for long periods with acetylsalicylic acid.

“So far, clinical trials of the adjuvanted vaccine have shown an excellent response in healthy children. We don’t yet have results in children who have underlying medical conditions. So, in the interim, it makes sense to offer a second dose,” advises Peterborough’s Medical Officer of

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Health, Dr. Rosana Pellizzari. "All household members of children who are immunocompromised, or unable to be vaccinated, are also reminded to be immunized."

Children who received their first dose received a printed immunization record from the clinic or their health care provider. This record may have indicated the earliest date of the second dose. Many will not need that second dose. For those who do, parents can bring them to any of the scheduled community clinics starting today, as long as they are able to provide the date when the first dose was received.

The Health Unit is offering the vaccine in school-based clinics. For many, this will be their first dose. However, if a child received the first dose earlier and the school clinic falls after the 21 day interval, the second dose can be administered at the school provided the immunization record from the first dose is attached to the consent form. Many family physicians and pediatricians also have vaccine and are able to provide a second dose, if necessary.

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For further information, please contact:

Brittany Cadence
Communications Officer
(705) 743-1000, ext. 391