

2020/2021 Influenza vaccine recommendations for children with egg allergy and/or asthma

During the 2020/21 influenza season, the nasal influenza vaccine (Fluenz Tetra, also known as Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV)) will be offered to:

- All children aged 2-11 years old (the programme has been expanded to include children of school Year 7 age in secondary schools (those aged 11 on 31 August 2020)).
- Children aged 12 -18 years with long term health conditions (e.g. asthma requiring previous hospital admission). Children aged 6 months to 2 years with long-term health conditions will be offered the injected flu vaccine.
- These children (with long term health conditions) who have not received influenza vaccine previously should be offered a second dose of vaccine, at least four weeks later.
- Household contacts (age 12-18 years) of those on the NHS Shielded Patient List.

In all settings providing vaccination, facilities should be available and staff trained to recognise and treat anaphylaxis

Egg allergy

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) have advised that children with egg allergy can safely be vaccinated with Fluenz Tetra in any setting (including primary care and schools). **This includes children with previous anaphylaxis to egg.** The advice is based on the SNIFFLE studies, in which 887 egg-allergic children safely received Fluenz vaccine, of whom over one third had a history of previous anaphylaxis to egg.

The only exception is for children who have previously had an anaphylaxis to egg *so severe that they required ventilation on an intensive care unit* as a result. These children are likely to tolerate Fluenz, but were excluded from the SNIFFLE studies. Therefore, these children should be referred to a specialist for immunisation in hospital, and can be given either Fluenz Tetra or an injected influenza vaccine (quadrivalent influenza vaccine, QIV).

Asthma

JCVI have advised that, on the basis of the SNIFFLE-4 study data, **children with asthma on inhaled corticosteroids may safely be given Fluenz Tetra, irrespective of the dose prescribed.** There are limited safety data in children who require regular oral steroids for routine asthma control or have previously required intensive care for asthma – such children should only be given LAIV on the advice of their specialist, or can be given an injected vaccine.

Fluenz Tetra should not be administered to a child/young person who has had increased wheezing and/or needed additional bronchodilator treatment in the previous 72 hours. These children should be offered a suitable injected influenza vaccine to avoid a delay in protection.