

**Public FAQs on temporary cessation of two influenza vaccines
(27 Oct 2020)**

1. How long will the two influenza vaccines be deferred?

MOH and HSA will assess the situation as more information becomes available and provide further advice on the use of the affected vaccines.

2. Does MOH/HSA have any local evidence for the adverse effects of the deferred vaccines?

All vaccines, as with any medicinal products, can result in side effects. Nonetheless, these are generally mild and resolve on their own. Common side effects from flu vaccinations include soreness or redness at injection site, fever, headache, muscle ache, fatigue and nausea.

Serious adverse events associated with flu vaccinations are very rare. There have never been any reported deaths from influenza vaccinations in Singapore.

3. What should individuals do if they have received the deferred vaccines? Are there any signs or symptoms they should look out for? When should they seek medical attention?

Influenza vaccination is generally safe and well tolerated by those vaccinated, and the temporary cessation of use of these two vaccines is a precautionary measure.

Like any medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Common side effects from influenza vaccination include soreness and redness at the injection site, fever, headaches, muscle aches, fatigue and nausea. These side effects are generally mild and resolve on their own. In rare instances, a person may experience high fever or severe allergic reactions (such as breathing difficulty, wheezing and swelling around the eyes) and immediate medical attention should be sought. These conditions are usually very rare and most likely to occur within minutes to hours following vaccination.

4. How long have these deferred vaccines been available for use in Singapore?

SKYCellFlu and VaxigripTetra have been registered in Singapore since August 2019 and May 2018, respectively.

5. Which countries does Singapore import the deferred vaccines from? Do they include South Korea?

SKYCellFlu is manufactured in South Korea while VaxigripTetra is manufactured in France.

6. What are the unaffected brands of influenza vaccines in Singapore?

Fluarix Tetra and Influvac Tetra have been brought into Singapore for the Northern Hemisphere (NH) 2020-21 influenza season, and healthcare providers and medical practitioners may continue to use these for influenza vaccination.

7. With the temporary deferment of the two influenza vaccines, will there be sufficient supply of other influenza vaccines for use here, given that the flu season is starting?

Other influenza vaccine products are available, but as medical practitioners generally only stock one type of influenza vaccine, persons are advised to call in advance to check that the influenza vaccine is available in the clinic.

8. What is MOH's/HSA's guidance on influenza vaccines, given the deaths in South Korea? Should people delay getting vaccinated?

Persons recommended to receive the influenza vaccination, including persons recommended under the National Childhood Immunisation Schedule (NCIS) and National Adult Immunisation Schedule (NAIS), may continue to receive their influenza vaccination using other brands of influenza vaccines. Influenza vaccination provides protection against seasonal influenza viruses, and is effective in reducing the risk of complications and deaths due to influenza. This is especially so for vulnerable groups such as the elderly, the young, pregnant women and those with certain pre-existing medical conditions.

9. How does Singapore ensure the safety and efficacy of vaccines in general?

Vaccines that have been approved for use in Singapore have been evaluated by HSA to ensure that they meet the required international standards of quality, safety and efficacy. To ensure that their benefits continue to outweigh the risks, HSA monitors the safety of vaccines through an adverse reaction monitoring system. It draws on the network of local healthcare professionals and international regulatory counterparts to pick up any adverse events suspected to be associated with the vaccines.

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