

To Each General Practitioner

18th January 2011

IMPORTANT NEWS

RE: Revised National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) recommendations for Influenza Vaccine for pregnant women and those up to six weeks post partum

Dear Doctor,

This letter contains important advice regarding influenza vaccination for ALL pregnant women and those up to six weeks post partum.

Following a meeting on 17th January 2011 the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) now recommends that

- **ALL pregnant women and those up to six weeks post partum should receive seasonal flu vaccine if they have not already received a dose of seasonal flu vaccine this season.**
- Pregnant women who received only pandemic vaccine previously should now receive seasonal flu vaccine. Seasonal flu vaccine should be given at least THREE weeks after pandemic vaccine.
- **Seasonal flu vaccine can be given at any stage of pregnancy.**

The rationale for this change is that a number of cases of influenza B infection have been seen in recent weeks and there is evidence that influenza B can cause significant morbidity for pregnant women. Therefore, even those pregnant women who have received pandemic vaccine previously remain at risk for influenza during the current influenza season. Seasonal flu vaccine will offer protection against both the H1N1 and influenza B strains.

As this guidance has changed from that previously recommended we would advise that you recall those pregnant women and those up to 6 weeks post partum who may have previously requested seasonal flu vaccine and were not then eligible for vaccination.

Frequently asked questions for healthcare professional have been updated to reflect this new guidance and are available to download from www.immunisation.ie

Yours sincerely



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