

HSE NATIONAL IMMUNISATION OFFICE

IMMUNISATION BULLETIN 69

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Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 (adapted protein subunit vaccine)

The Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 booster COVID-19 vaccine will be available in HSE Vaccination Clinics only from 18th December 2023.

Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 adapted vaccine is now authorised across the EU. The European Commission granted a marketing authorisation on 31st October 2023.

 For more information [read NIAC Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland Chapter 5a COVID-19](#).

This medicinal product is subject to additional monitoring. This will allow quick identification of new safety information. Healthcare professionals are asked to report any suspected adverse reactions to the HPRA.

The vaccine does not require dilution. Once the multidose vial is punctured, the vaccine should be used immediately. If not used, it may be kept for a single period between +2°C to +25°C and used within six hours.

If more than five 0.5ml doses can be safely and accurately withdrawn from a vial, they can be used as valid vaccines.

Licensed indications

Active immunisation to prevent COVID-19 caused by SARS-CoV-2 virus in individuals 12 years of age and older.

NIAC Recommendations

Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 vaccine is recommended for booster doses only (not for use in primary immunisation courses).

If there is a contraindication or precaution to an adapted mRNA vaccine, or a person has chosen not to receive an adapted mRNA COVID-19 vaccine booster, Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 may be used as an alternate COVID-19 booster vaccine.

Myocarditis and **pericarditis** are very rare side effects of both mRNA vaccines and Nuvaxovid, occurring predominantly after the second dose and in males under 30 years of age. If a vaccinee has a history of myocarditis or pericarditis after an mRNA COVID-19 vaccine their Cardiologist should be consulted before offering Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 vaccine.

Pregnancy: There is more limited experience of Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 in those who are pregnant, and the vaccine should only be considered when the potential benefits outweigh the potential risks.

The Nuvaxovid XBB.1.5 vaccine is only available from HSE Vaccination Clinics.

Patients can **contact HSELive** on **1800 700 700** for further information.

LAIV influenza vaccine (2023/2024 influenza season)

From December 4th 2023 the Department of Health, has provided funding to the HSE to extend the Quadrivalent Live Attenuated Influenza (LAIV) vaccine programme free to **all children aged 2 to 17 years inclusive**.

The injectable QIV (Influvac Tetra) can be used for children for in the following scenarios:

- a child aged 2-17 years in an at-risk group and is contraindicated LAIV or has an aversion to taking the nasal LAIV that makes giving the LAIV vaccine very difficult or
- in a child aged 6 months to < 2 years and in an at-risk group

The aim of the childhood LAIV flu vaccine programme is to reduce:

- morbidity and mortality from influenza in children
- transmission of influenza to the elderly and persons in risk groups
- the number of hospital admissions
- transmission to health care workers in families with children
- absenteeism of children from school and their parents from work

The MMR Vaccine Catch-up Programme

There has been an increase in measles cases internationally and in Europe. In August 2023, a small number of measles cases were reported in Ireland, the first outbreak since 2019. The MMR vaccine provides the best protection against catching measles and preventing outbreaks.

The HSE is now offering an opportunity for General Practitioners with capacity to opt-in to an MMR Catch-up Programme for their unvaccinated or incompletely vaccinated patients aged 10 years old and younger this Winter 2023.

Those eligible for MMR vaccination under the programme are:

Children aged between 14 months and 10 years old inclusive who did not receive the MMR vaccine when they were 12 months old, and/or age 4-5 years old in junior infants.

Therefore, any child aged between 14 months and 10 years old (inclusive) who is not age appropriately vaccinated with the MMR vaccine (i.e., who has missed one or both of their MMR vaccines) is eligible for this catch-up campaign.

For more information, [read Frequently Asked Questions for Healthcare Professionals](#) on NIO website.

Rubella immunity

Anyone who has documented evidence of receiving one MMR vaccine are considered immune to rubella infection irrespective of rubella serology. Serology is not recommended after the MMR vaccine as it may not be accurate.

If a woman has documented evidence of having received 1 dose of a rubella-containing vaccine, *irrespective of rubella serology*, no further rubella (MMR) vaccine is necessary.

Two doses may be needed for protection against measles and mumps.

For more information, [read NIAC Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland](#) on RCPI website.

Therefore any woman who has documented evidence of having received one MMR vaccine is considered immune to rubella infection.

Common Queries

Can the LAIV vaccine be given to adults who request it?

The LAIV vaccine is not licensed for anyone aged 18 years or older and so is contraindicated in anyone aged 18 years or older.

Can children aged 2 to 17 inclusive have the IM QIV vaccine if the child's parent requests it?

No, the Influvac Tetra IM QIV vaccine is not available free as part of the children's flu vaccine programme unless the LAIV vaccine is contraindicated.

Can parents now attend their GP for the MMR vaccines due in Junior infants?

No, the MMR Vaccine Catch-up Programme is only for children who have missed the MMR schedule at the recommended times and does not replace the Junior Infants School Immunisation Programme.

If parents are unsure about their child's vaccination history, what can they do?

Parents can contact their local health office for their child's MMR vaccination records.

[Read more on how to check your child's vaccination history](#) on NIO website.

National Immunisation Conference

Together with the National Immunisation Office the Professional Development Coordinators for General Practice Nursing are organising an Immunisation Conference to be held at four locations around the country on the following dates in 2024.

Location	Date	Venue	Spaces available
Dublin	Wednesday 21 st February	Clayton Hotel, Cardiff Lane	150
Athlone	Wednesday 28 th February	The Shamrock Lodge Hotel	150
Cork	Wednesday 6 th March	Silver Springs Hotel	150
Sligo	Thursday 14 th March	Clayton Hotel, Clarion Road	150

Booking is essential and you will need to book your place via Eventbrite.

[Book your place](#) at National Immunisation Conference 2024.

Website



[Visit our website](#)

Visit our website www.immunisation.ie regularly for information to support vaccinators and health professionals responding to queries.

HSeLanD Vaccination Training Programme



[Visit HSeLanD](#)

You will find programmes developed by our office by logging into your account on www.hseland.ie selecting **courses** then selecting **clinical skills** and finally selecting **National Immunisation Office**.



[Contact HSeLanD](#)

If you have any issues with the platform please contact HSeLand directly.

Do you have queries?



[Send your query](#)

Clinical queries from healthcare professionals can be directed to our dedicated email address

Should vaccines be exposed to temperatures outside of parameters please contact a National Immunisation Office pharmacist immediately. Contacts include:

- email pharmacynio@hse.ie
- Leah Gaughan: mobile 087 1881667
- Achal Gupta: mobile 087 4064810
- Cliona Kiersey: mobile 087 9915452
- Cora Kerrigan: mobile 087 1881565

If you have a query about errors or changes to records on COVAX, please contact the Contact Management Programme on 01 240 8786.

Queries that are not clinical or technical cannot be answered by the National Immunisation Office



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