



FAX about ...



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Flu What's New? Product Availability in 2018/2019

The Ontario Ministry of Health and Long-Term Care (MOHLTC) has released the following information on the publicly funded influenza vaccines for the 2018/2019 flu season:

Individuals 6 months to 17 years of age:

Clients in this age category are publicly funded for Quadrivalent Inactivated Vaccine (QIV). Clients ages **2-17** are also publicly funded for Quadrivalent Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (Q-LAIV). QIV products include **FluLaval® Tetra** and **Fluzone®** quadrivalent vaccines. The Q-LAIV product is **FluMist®**. The current evidence does **not** support the **preferential use** of QIV or Q-LAIV in individuals **2-17** years of age.

Individuals 18 to 64 years of age:

Clients in this age category are publicly funded for **QIV**.

Individuals 65 years of age and up:

Clients in this age category are publicly funded for QIV **or** High-Dose Trivalent Inactivated Vaccine (**high-dose TIV**). The high-dose TIV product available is **FluZone®**. This product is only available for **primary care providers** (e.g., physicians and nurse practitioners), **participating retirement homes, long-term care homes and hospitals**. It is **not** available through **pharmacies**.

What is the difference between high-dose TIV and QIV?

The high-dose TIV contains three influenza strains, which are of a higher antigen content per strain than standard-dose influenza vaccine formulations. Studies have shown that the higher antigen content **improves the immune response** and improves how well the vaccine works compared to standard dose TIV. Both the high-dose TIV

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and QIV formulations are inactivated influenza vaccines. The high-dose TIV contains only **one strain** of influenza B compared to the **two influenza B strains** in the QIV.

Which influenza vaccine should an individual over 65 receive?

To date, **no** studies have directly compared high-dose TIV and QIV formulations. High-dose TIV provides better protection against vaccine strains including influenza A **H3N2** strain, which has been associated with greater disease burden in individuals who are 65 years of age and older, compared to QIV products.

What strains of influenza are covered by the 2018/2019 influenza vaccines?

For the northern hemisphere's 2018/2019 season, the World Health Organization (WHO) has recommended the following strains be included:

Quadrivalent vaccine:

- A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
- A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016 (H3N2) – like virus
- B/Colorado/06/2017- like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage)
- B/Phuket/3073/2013- like virus (B/Yamagata/13/88 lineage)

Trivalent Vaccine:

- A/Michigan/45/2015 (H1N1) pdm09-like virus
- A/Singapore/INFIMH-16-0019/2016 (H3N2) – like virus
- B/Colorado/06/2017- like virus (B/Victoria/2/87 lineage)

For more information on influenza or the vaccine, please visit the following websites:

- 1) Universal Influenza Immunization Program: www.ontario.ca/influenza
- 2) Public Health Agency of Canada – National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI) Statement on Seasonal Influenza Vaccine: www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/naci-ccni/#rec
- 3) Immunize Canada: www.immunize.ca

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