

HSE NATIONAL IMMUNISATION OFFICE

IMMUNISATION BULLETIN 68

THIS EDITION COVERS

- Seasonal Influenza Vaccination
- PPV23 Vaccination
- COVID-19 vaccines for children aged less than 12 years
- Common queries

Seasonal Influenza Vaccination

HSE Flu Vaccination Programme

The vaccines available for the 2023/2024 HSE Flu vaccine Programme and recommended groups for vaccination

1. For children

For the 2023/2024 influenza season the Department of Health, will provide funding to the HSE to offer Fluenz Tetra Live Attenuated Influenza Vaccine (LAIV) free to

- all children aged 2 to 12 years **inclusive**.
- all children aged 13 to 17 years **inclusive** who are in a risk group.

2. For adults

Influvac Tetra is a non-live quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIV) for IM injection only.

QIV is also available for all other eligible populations including those eligible children (aged 2-17 years) with contraindications to LAIV (QIV is licensed for those 6 months of age and older).

See Table below:

HSE Flu vaccines

The 2023/2024 HSE seasonal influenza vaccination programme flu vaccines available

Product Name	Vaccine Type	Age	Manufacturer	Storage	Shelf Life
Influvac Tetra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Non-live quadrivalent influenza vaccine, QIV • cultured in fertilised hens' eggs • surface antigen, inactivated • prefilled syringe for intramuscular injection 	From 6 months	Mylan	Influenza vaccines should be	(1 Year) Until end of season
Fluenz Tetra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • quadrivalent live attenuated influenza vaccine, LAIV • produced in Vero cells and cultured in hens' eggs • nasal spray suspension • live attenuated 	24 months to less than 18 years	AstraZeneca AB	stored at +2 to +8° C. If a vaccine has been frozen, it should not be used.	18 weeks

Recommended groups

HSE Recommended groups for vaccination

- All children aged **2-12 years** at the time of vaccination
 - Persons aged **65 and older**
 - Pregnant women (vaccine can be given at any stage of pregnancy)
 - Healthcare workers including all General Practice and pharmacy staff
 - Residents of nursing homes and other long stay institutions
 - Carers and household contacts of people with increased medical risk**
 - People with regular contact with pigs, poultry or water fowl
- Those aged 6 to 23 months and aged **13-64 years** with:
- Chronic heart disease including acute coronary syndrome
 - Chronic liver disease
 - Chronic neurological disease including multiple sclerosis, hereditary and degenerative disorders of the central nervous system
 - Chronic renal failure
 - Cancer patients
 - Chronic respiratory disease, including chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, cystic fibrosis, moderate or severe asthma or bronchopulmonary dysplasia
 - Diabetes mellitus
 - Down syndrome
 - Haemoglobinopathies
 - Immunosuppression due to disease or treatment, including asplenia or splenic dysfunction and cancer patients
 - Morbid obesity, i.e. body mass index of 40 or over
 - On long-term aspirin therapy (because of the risk of Reyes syndrome)
 - With any condition (e.g. cognitive dysfunction, spinal cord injury, seizure disorder, or other neuromuscular disorder) that can compromise respiratory function especially those attending special schools/day centres
 - With moderate to severe neurodevelopmental disorders such as cerebral palsy and intellectual disability

PPV23 Vaccination

Pneumococcal Vaccination (PPV23) Programme

The PPV23 vaccine prevents severe disease caused by the pneumococcal bacteria.

Who is the PPV23 vaccine recommended for?

PPV23 vaccine is recommended for those:

- aged 65 years and older (one dose only)
- ≥2 years of age to 64 years in risk groups.

Those aged 2 to 64 years with the following conditions should be vaccinated with PPV23:

- Diabetes
- Chronic lung, heart, liver or kidney disease
- Chronic neurological disease
- Children aged over 2 years and under 5 years of age with a history of invasive pneumococcal disease
- Coeliac disease
- Down Syndrome
- Cochlear implants or are about to get cochlear implants
- Immune deficiency because of a disease or treatment, including cancer patients
- HIV infection
- Absent spleen or a non-functioning spleen
- CSF leaks, either congenital or complicating skull fractures or neurosurgery
- Intracranial shunt.

How many doses are needed?

- If your patient are aged 65 years or more, they only need to get the vaccine once.
- Immunocompetent persons should only receive one dose of PPV23 before 65 years of age.
- For individuals whose antibody levels are likely to decline more rapidly, (e.g. asplenia, hyposplenia) one booster should be given 5 years after the first dose.
- Adults aged ≥65 years should receive a dose of PPV23 if they received PPV23 more than 5 years previously and were less than 65 years of age at the time.

What can you as a GP do to increase uptake?

Remind all patients aged 65 and over and patients aged 2 to 64 years in an at risk group about the vaccine.

Can PPV23 be co-administered with other vaccines?

PPV23 can be co-administered with flu and COVID-19 vaccines.

Is the PPV23 vaccine free?

The pneumococcal vaccine (PPV23) is free if your patients are 65 years or older, or if they are in an at-risk group. If they have a medical card or "GP visit card", the vaccine and consultation are free.

If they do not have a medical card or "GP visit card", the vaccine is free but they need to pay a consultation fee.



[Read more about the pneumococcal vaccine](#) on the HSE website.

PPV23 vaccination continues on page 4

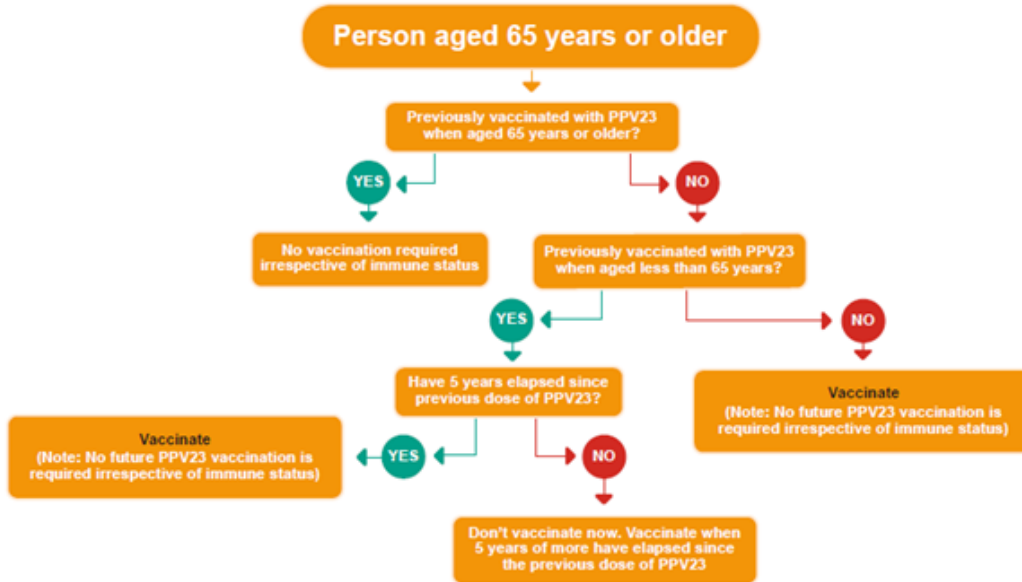


PPV23 Vaccination (cont.)

Pneumococcal Vaccination (PPV23) Programme



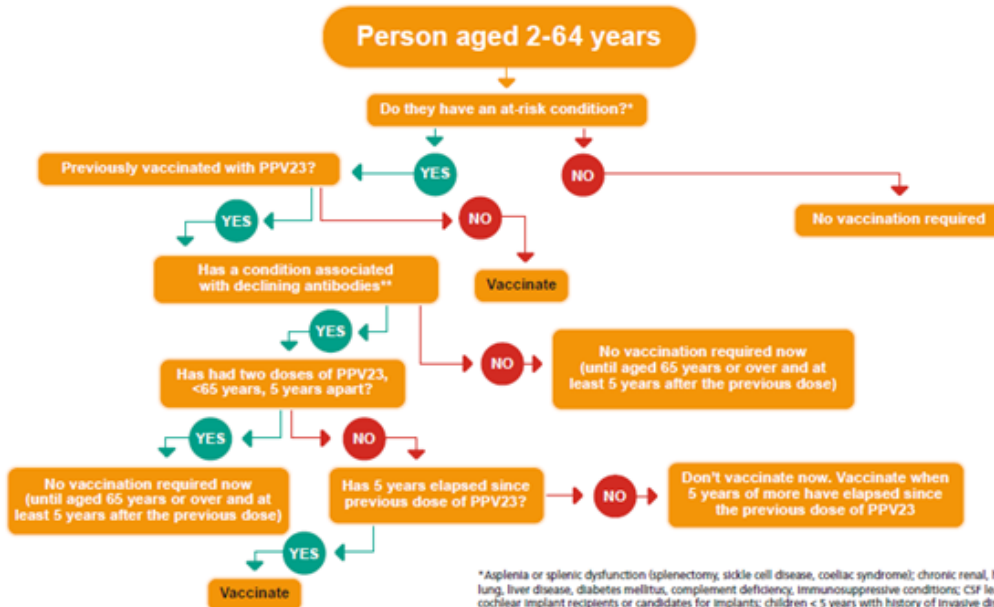
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (PPV23): Decision tool for vaccination for those aged 65 years or over



[Download PPV23 algorithm for people aged 65 and over.](#)



Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine (PPV23): Decision tool for vaccination for those aged 2-64 years



www.immunisation.ie

*Asplenia or splenic dysfunction (splenectomy, sickle cell disease, coeliac syndrome); chronic renal, heart, lung, liver disease, diabetes mellitus, complement deficiency, immunosuppressive conditions; CSF leak, cochlear implant recipients or candidates for implants; children < 5 years with history of invasive disease.
**those with no spleen, with splenic dysfunction, immunosuppression including HIV infection, nephrotic syndrome, renal transplant or chronic renal disease.



[Download PPV23 algorithm for people aged 2 to 64 years.](#)

COVID-19 Vaccination

COVID-19 vaccines for children aged less than 12 years

COVID-19 vaccines for children aged less than 12 years are as follows:

Primary schedule

- Children aged 6 months-4 years: Comirnaty® 3 mcg/dose
- Children aged 5-11 years: Comirnaty® (adapted) Original/Omicron BA.4-5, 10 mcg/dose

Booster dose

Children aged 5-11 years only who require an autumn COVID-19 booster vaccine are recommended Comirnaty® XBB.1.5 (5-11 years) vaccine.

The vaccine dose is 10 micrograms. Comirnaty® XBB.1.5 (5-11 years) vaccine is only available in COVID-19 vaccination centres.

The paediatric Comirnaty® XBB.1.5 vaccine is **not available in general practice or in retail pharmacies**.

 [Read more about the children's COVID-19 booster](#) on HSE website or contact HSELive at 1800 700 700

Common queries

Can a child who is living with someone who is immunocompromised have the LAIV vaccine?

Yes, they can, provided the person they are living with is not so immunocompromised they are living in isolation in the weeks just following a haematopoietic stem cell transplant (HSCT).

Can the LAIV vaccine cause virus shedding?

The attenuated vaccine viruses in LAIV are cold adapted. These viruses can replicate at the lower temperatures found in the nose but cannot replicate efficiently at body temperature elsewhere in the body.

Vaccinated children can shed the attenuated virus for a few days after vaccination but the virus that is shed cannot cause infection. Therefore, the weakened viruses do not cause flu infection in others, or in the person vaccinated.

 [Read our Frequently Asked Questions on Flu Vaccine](#) for more information for health and care professionals.

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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