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RECOMMENDATIONS - INFLUENZA VACCINE FOR 1982-1983

Influenza vaccine for 1982-1983 will consist of an inactivated trivalent preparation of antigens representative of the influenza viruses expected to be prevalent. The specific antigens and their potency in the vaccine will be the same as in 1981-1982: 15 µg each of hemagglutinin of A/Brazil/78 (H1N1), A/Bangkok/79 (H3N2), and B/Singapore/79 viruses per 0.5 ml dose.

Adults and children greater or equal to 13 years old will require only one dose. Children less than 13 years old should receive two doses of vaccine. However, children who have already had at least one of the influenza vaccines recommended for use from 1978 to 1982 will require only one dose of the 1982-1983 vaccine. The influenza vaccine dosage schedule for 1982-83 is summarized in Table 1.

TABLE 1. Influenza vaccine* dosage, by age, 1982-1983

Age Group	Product	Dosage	Number of Doses
≥13 years	Whole virion (whole virus) or Sub-virion (split virus)	0.5 ml	1
3-12 years	Sub-virion (split virus)	0.5 ml	2†
6-35 months	Sub-virion (split virus)	0.25 ml‡	2†

*Contains 15 µg each of A/Brazil/78(H1N1), A/Bangkok/79(H3N2), and B/Singapore/79 hemagglutinin antigens in each 0.5 ml.

†Four weeks or more between doses, both doses recommended for good protection. However, if the individual received at least 1 dose of any influenza vaccine recommended from 1978-79 to 1981-82, one dose is sufficient.

‡Based on limited data since the likelihood of febrile convulsions is greater for this age group special care should be taken in weighing relative risks and benefits.

Vaccine Usage

Influenza vaccine is strongly recommended for all individuals at increased risk of adverse consequences from infections of the lower respiratory tract. Such conditions include: (1) acquired or congenital heart disease, (2) any chronic disorder with compromised pulmonary function, (3) chronic renal disease, (4) diabetes mellitus and other metabolic diseases, (5) chronic severe anemia, (6) conditions which compromise the immune mechanism, (7) older persons, particularly those over age 65.

Vaccine Information

As in past years, influenza vaccine is available to all physicians and other health care providers from the State Immunization Program. In order to simplify distribution, only split virus vaccine will be stocked. The vaccine will be available in 5.0 ml, 10-dose vials. Orders should be submitted through regular supply channels.

During the 1981-1982 winter, influenza activity was widespread in Alaska although it was generally low in the United States. The current vaccine contains antigens identical to the antigens in the vaccine used in the past two years: 1980-81, 1981-82. There is little data on the persistence of immunity from influenza vaccination beyond one year. However, there is great likelihood that individuals who have received influenza vaccine for the past two years will be protected for this year from influenza infection with the same influenza virus strains.

While the Centers for Disease Control still recommends annual influenza vaccination in high risk individuals, we feel that the benefit will be maximal in individuals who have not previously been vaccinated and that efforts should be concentrated among this group. While some additional benefit may be conferred on individuals who have previously received the vaccine, we anticipate that the benefit will be minimal in 1982-83 compared with the protection conferred to those individuals in past years. Individuals who have had influenza vaccine in the past two years who still request it should be vaccinated, but major efforts to seek out these individuals for a repeat immunization this year are not necessary.