

Influenza vaccine recommendations for children with egg allergy 2018/19 season

During the 2018 / 19 influenza season, the nasal influenza vaccine (Fluenz Tetra) will be offered to children aged 2-9 years old (including children in reception class and school years 1 -5). Schoolchildren will be offered the vaccine via a schools- based programme.

Children aged 2 -18 years with long term health conditions (e.g. asthma requiring previous hospital admission), should also be offered Fluenz Tetra. Children between 6 months and 2 years with long-term health conditions will be offered the injected flu vaccine.

In all settings providing vaccination, facilities should be available and staff trained to recognise and treat anaphylaxis

The Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation have advised that children with egg allergy can safely be vaccinated with Fluenz Tetra in any setting (including primary care and schools). This includes children with previous anaphylaxis to egg. This advice is based on the SNIFFLE studies, in which 887 egg-allergic children safely received Fluenz vaccine, of whom over one third had a history of previous anaphylaxis to egg.

The only exception is for children who have previously had an anaphylaxis to egg *so severe that they required ventilation on an intensive care unit* as a result. These children are likely to tolerate Fluenz, but were excluded from the SNIFFLE studies. Therefore, these children should be referred to a specialist for immunisation in hospital.

Fluenz Tetra should not be administered to a child with current or recent acute wheezing in the 72 hours preceding vaccination, or who have required oral steroids in the previous 2 weeks.

Inactivated (injected) influenza vaccines that are egg free or have an ovalbumin content < 0.12 µg/ml may be used safely in individuals with egg allergy, in primary care.

Further information can be found in the DHSC Green Book, available at:

https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733840/Influenza_green_book_chapter19.pdf