

Public Health Agency of Canada Recommendations for the Use of Unadjuvanted H1N1 Vaccine for Travellers

The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends that travellers be vaccinated against the H1N1 influenza virus before leaving Canada for travel to areas where the H1N1 influenza virus is circulating.

The H1N1 vaccine currently available in Canada is the Influenza A (H1N1) 2009 Pandemic Monovalent Vaccine (Without Adjuvant). Recommendations for use of this vaccine, as based on the best currently available scientific information, are:

- Children between 6 months to 35 months of age should receive two 0.25 ml doses (half doses containing 7.5 ug of antigen) of vaccine, given at least 21 days apart.
- Children aged 3 to 9 years of age should receive two 0.5 ml doses (containing 15 ug of antigen) of vaccine, given at least 21 days apart.
- All other persons 10 years of age and above, including pregnant women, the elderly and those with weakened immune systems should receive one 0.5 ml dose (containing 15 ug of antigen) of vaccine.

In clinical trials, the most common reactions after receiving the unadjuvanted H1N1 vaccine were minor and included pain, swelling and redness at the injection site. Other commonly reported reactions were fatigue, muscle and joint pain, and headache. In younger children, fever, drowsiness, irritability and loss of appetite were also reported in low levels.

During the H1N1 outbreak in Canada, adjuvanted vaccine was recommended for most Canadians as it provided better protection against H1N1 influenza. However, the adjuvanted vaccine has now expired and is not currently available in Canada.

As the circulation of H1N1 influenza in Canada is very low at this time, vaccination against H1N1 is only recommended for travellers visiting areas where H1N1 is circulating. If travellers have received the H1N1 vaccine previously, no further vaccine is needed.

The seasonal influenza vaccine for 2010-2011 will contain the 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza strain and should be used to protect travellers when it becomes available in the Fall of 2010.