

GET A HEAD START



ON YOUR FLU SEASON!

FOLLOWING THE 2015 SEASON HEALTHCARE PROFESSIONALS WERE SURVEYED AND 47% felt that patients went unvaccinated due to delays in the availability of influenza vaccines¹

WILL YOU BE READY TO START YOUR VACCINATION PROGRAM?

- The Department of Health recommends influenza immunisation in early autumn to allow time for immunity to be strengthened before the flu season starts.²
- The Influenza Specialist Group prefers immunisation over delayed or non-vaccination.³

VACCINATING EARLY CAN ALSO POTENTIALLY:

- Increase vaccination coverage.
- Reduce pressure on clinic resources.
- Maximise immunisation opportunities.

What is the difference between TIV and QIV?

- Trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV) and quadrivalent influenza vaccine (QIV) both contain the 3 strains (2x influenza A and 1x influenza B) recommended by the World Health Organisation (WHO) for inclusion in ALL seasonal influenza vaccines for the 2016 season.⁴
- For manufacturers who choose to make a QIV, WHO recommends an additional B strain which may afford broader protection depending on what is circulating.^{4,5}
- In 11 out of the last 15 years, the B strain not included in the TIV has accounted for less than 5% of typed flu cases.^{6,7}

When should influenza vaccination commence?

TIMELY VACCINATION IS MOST IMPORTANT

- Vaccination is best undertaken in early Autumn, in anticipation of Winter outbreaks of influenza. Vaccination can be given as early as February if vaccine is available.^{2,5}
- In 2015, over 9000 influenza cases were recorded by the end of May. Furthermore, 92% of typed cases during the first half of 2015 matched the strains included in the trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV) which had been available from early March.⁸⁻¹⁰
- Influenza A is typically more common, more severe, affects people of all ages and peaks earlier in the year than influenza B.^{6,7,11,12} TIV and QIV contain the same A strains and are expected to afford equivalent protection against influenza A.^{3,4}

Should I wait until the NIP to start my influenza vaccination program?

- In recent years, private market vaccine has been available ahead of the NIP and allows clinicians to start vaccinating early and potentially increase overall vaccination coverage.^{8,13}
- Delaying vaccination may lead to people missing out on vaccination and the undesirable outcome of lower coverage across the community.³

If the only difference between QIV and TIV is an additional B strain, who is more susceptible to influenza B?

Influenza B predominantly affects children.^{11,14-16}

Does that mean TIV is no longer considered effective or suitable for use in Australia?

- TIV has historically matched the majority of circulating influenza viruses in Australia and remains an appropriate vaccine for general use.⁵⁻⁷
- The degree to which QIV will translate into additional clinical protection for patients when compared to TIV remains to be demonstrated clinically.³



**GET READY EARLY
THIS FLU SEASON!**

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