

**2009 PANVAX® PANDEMIC H1N1 INFLUENZA  
VACCINE (unadjuvanted)  
FACT SHEET FOR PREGNANT WOMEN**



**What is Pandemic H1N1Influenza?**

Influenza (the flu) is a serious respiratory infection that is caused by a virus. Influenza causes fever, cough headache, muscle soreness, sore throat and stuffy nose. Influenza spreads easily from infected people to others through coughing and sneezing. It can also be picked-up through direct contact with surfaces and objects, like unwashed hands and toys.

Pandemic H1N1 influenza is a new influenza strain that appeared in April 2009. It has since spread around the world. Pandemic H1N1 influenza can infect anyone, although people younger than 60 years of age are more likely to become infected than older individuals. Most people recover fully but a few people can develop serious complications. Those at a somewhat increased risk of complications when they get infected are children less than 5 years of age, people with other medical problems, pregnant women and women who had a baby in the past four weeks, people who are very overweight, Aboriginal people and seniors.

**How does the Panvax® vaccine work?**

Panvax® is an influenza vaccine made specifically to protect against the Pandemic H1N1 influenza strain. It comes from Australia and is made exactly like the seasonal influenza vaccine that is produced each year in the country. The vaccine contains inactivated virus that allows the body to make protection (also called an immune response) to the Pandemic H1N1 virus. This protection helps prevent the vaccinated person from getting sick if exposed to the virus. Based on early studies, Panvax® is expected to be very effective in preventing Pandemic H1N1 infection. Panvax® does **not** contain an adjuvant (“helper” substance) which is used in another Pandemic H1N1 influenza vaccine in Canada.

Panvax® will **not** protect against seasonal influenza infection. So, this year you will need both the Pandemic H1N1 and seasonal influenza vaccines to get as much influenza protection as possible.

**Who should get Panvax® and how often?**

Panvax® is being provided specifically for pregnant women. Only one dose is needed.

**What are the risks from Panvax®?**

Panvax® is made exactly like the seasonal influenza vaccine that is produced each year in Australia. Panvax® has not been specifically studied in pregnant women, however the seasonal vaccine is used in pregnant women with no safety concerns. This seasonal influenza vaccine is very safe and serious side effects are very rare, and Panvax® is expected to be just as safe.

**Because the influenza vaccine does not contain live virus, you cannot get flu from the vaccine.**

Minor side effects from Panvax® are expected to include: pain and swelling where the injection is given, tiredness, headache, muscle pain, and fever. It is expected that most side effects will be mild, not last long and go away on their own.

Experience with Panvax® is limited, but it is expected to be like the seasonal influenza vaccine where:

- Serious allergic reactions are very rare.
- An illness called Guillain-Barré Syndrome (GBS), which causes muscle paralysis, occurred after the influenza vaccine in 1976 and may occur very uncommonly after the seasonal influenza vaccine in some other influenza seasons.

- During the 2000-2001 influenza season, an “Oculo-Respiratory Syndrome” (ORS) was reported after the seasonal influenza vaccine. ORS began within 24 hours after vaccination and was generally mild. Symptoms included red eyes, coughing, wheezing, and/or swelling of the face.

## WHO SHOULD NOT GET Panvax® ?

Anyone who has had a serious allergic reaction to:

- eggs or egg products or chicken proteins
- a previous influenza vaccine
- neomycin or gentamicin (antibiotics)
- polymyxin B sulfate (found in Polysporin)
- Thimerosal (a form of mercury found in other vaccines and contact lens solution)

People who developed hives, swelling of the mouth or throat, or trouble breathing after a previous influenza vaccine, after eating eggs or egg products, or after receiving polymyxin B, neomycin or thimerosal, should not be vaccinated. They should consult with their doctor and consider seeing an allergist.

- Tell the nurse or doctor if you have ever had an allergic reaction to any vaccine in the past.
- Children under 10 years of age.
- People who are seriously ill with an infection that started recently should wait until they recover before getting Panvax®.
- People who have had severe Oculo-Respiratory Syndrome (ORS) after a past influenza vaccine that required them to be in the hospital.
- People with a history of Guillain-Barré Syndrome that developed within 8 weeks of a past influenza vaccine.
- People with bleeding disorders or who are taking medication that could affect blood clotting should mention this to the nurse before receiving the vaccine.

**Allergic reactions to the influenza vaccine are very rare. If a reaction to the vaccine was to happen, it would usually happen shortly after the vaccine is given. You must remain in the clinic area for at least 15 minutes after the needle is given.**

### Call your doctor if any of these symptoms happen within three days after your vaccination

- Hives
- Swelling of the mouth or throat
- Trouble breathing, hoarseness or wheezing
- Any other unusual or serious condition

**If you have any questions or concerns about influenza immunization, please speak to the nurse**

DCS-11/09-VPD-090

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