

Seqirus Media Monitoring

25th Apr 2019

Seqirus mentions

Flu vaccine pitfalls

In Australia, the most common reason pharmacists are reported over flu vaccination is regarding the age of the recipient, says PDL. In its latest practice alert, PDL has taken a look at the aspects of influenza vaccine supply and administration which are more likely to lead to an incident being reported. The first of these is age-related incidents, which can be divided into three sub-groups: prescriptions for children, clients aged 65 and over, and clients vaccinated in the pharmacy who do not meet the state-legislated minimum age. The second-most common age-related report relates to patients 65 years of age and over, receiving pharmacist-administered quadrivalent influenza vaccines without the opportunity to consider or discuss the option of the high-dose trivalent vaccine.

<https://ajp.com.au/news/flu-vaccine-pitfalls/>

When is the right time to get a flu shot?

As Australia comes off the back of a fatal summer flu season, influenza vaccines are becoming available to protect against winter variants of the illness. The Department of Health is already urging vulnerable people to take advantage of the vaccine, offered free to over 65s. But the Royal Australian College of General Practitioners (RACGP) is warning vaccine timing is everything. The association's president Harry Nespolon encouraged people to speak with their doctor before a flu shot to ensure the timing is effective. Last year, over 65 year olds accounted for 75 per cent of influenza-associated deaths. To maximise their protection, the enhanced Fluad (Seqirus) vaccine is being offered to them.

<https://www.thecourier.com.au/story/6088195/when-is-the-right-time-to-get-a-flu-shot/?cs=68>

Industry News

Overwhelmed by Shingrix demand, GSK plots \$100M vaccine manufacturing boost

GlaxoSmithKline's new shingles vaccine Shingrix hit the market running, performing so well in its launch year that the drugmaker ran into supply constraints. In response, GSK has pledged to boost its capacity, and it's now investing \$100 million in vaccine production in Montana. GSK on Wednesday unveiled a \$100 million investment to an existing site in Hamilton, Montana, where it makes adjuvants used in several of its vaccines.

<https://www.fiercepharma.com/vaccines/gsk-commits-100m-for-expanded-vaccine-manufacturing-site-montana>

Pandemic Influenza News

No News Recorded

Academic studies

Study finds repeat flu infections most common in younger children

A study of Austrian children and adolescents over four flu seasons found that repeat infections in consecutive seasons occurred frequently, mostly involving children between ages 3 and 8 years old. The retrospective analysis is based on results of 2,308 positive flu cases identified by a lab in Innsbruck from the 2014-15 season to the 2017-18 season. Researchers found that in 2015-16, nearly 12% of patients diagnosed with flu had also been sick with the virus during the previous season, and in 2016-17, more than 14% had been sick with flu at least once during the previous two

seasons, and in 2017-18, more than 18% had one or more infections during the earlier three seasons.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2019/04/news-scan-apr-24-2019>

Eating Elderberries Can Help Minimize Influenza Symptoms

A recent study by researchers at the University of Sydney has determined exactly how a popular ancient remedy, the elderberry fruit, can help the fight against influenza. Conducted by professor Fariba Deghani, Dr. Golnoosh Torabian and Dr. Peter Valtchev as part of the ARC Training Centre for the Australian Food Processing Industry, the study showed that compounds from elderberries can directly inhibit the virus's entry and replication in human cells, and can help strengthen a person's immune response to the virus. The group performed a comprehensive examination of the mechanism by which phytochemicals, compounds that positively effect health, from elderberries combat influenza infections.

<https://www.labmanager.com/news/2019/04/eating-elderberries-can-help-minimize-influenza-symptoms>

Additional sources: (Business Standard) (Fox News) (The Weather Network)

Heat Waves Due to Climate Change Could Target Immune System

A group of researchers at the University of Tokyo conducted research on mice to reveal that heat waves can reduce the body response to flu. The researchers investigated the effects of high temperature on mice who were infected with influenza virus. The experiment conducted by the team revealed astounding claims that could impact the future of vaccinations and nutrition. The study holds that climate change could affect immunity to influenza had not been studied before. The research is a peer-reviewed experimental study with mice and published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences of the United States of America Latest Articles.

<https://www.adsenseinternetmarketing.com/92/heat-waves-due-to-climate-change-could-target-immune-system>

Influenza A virus ribonucleoproteins form liquid organelles at endoplasmic reticulum exit sites

Influenza A virus has an eight-partite RNA genome that during viral assembly forms a complex containing one copy of each RNA. Genome assembly is a selective process driven by RNA-RNA interactions and is hypothesized to lead to discrete punctate structures scattered through the cytosol. Here, we show that contrary to the accepted view, formation of these structures precedes RNA-RNA interactions among distinct viral ribonucleoproteins (vRNPs), as they assemble in cells expressing only one vRNP type. We demonstrate that these viral inclusions display characteristics of liquid organelles, segregating from the cytosol without a delimitating membrane, dynamically exchanging material and adapting fast to environmental changes.

<https://www.nature.com/articles/s41467-019-09549-4>

Pediatric influenza news

SA girl, 15, dies at Flinders Medical Centre from flu virus with relative taken seriously ill

In Australia, a 15-year-old girl has died from the flu virus and a relative of hers remains seriously ill in hospital, SA Health revealed on Wednesday. The teenager, who was being treated for the influenza, died in the Flinders Medical Centre over the weekend. The youngster's death is the second linked to the flu in less than two weeks — and came as medics warned that this year's strain could prove more lethal than those of previous years.

<https://www.adelaidenow.com.au/news/south-australia/sa-girl-15-dies-at-flinders-medical-centre-from-flu-virus-and-relative-taken-seriously-ill/news-story/7d94bdc888ee74acbadae861eb8a9956>

Additional sources: (Daily Mail)

Parents reassured febrile seizures following vaccination not dangerous

New research from the University of Sydney has found the severity of febrile seizures following

vaccination is no different to febrile seizures from another cause, such as from a virus, and that the majority of seizures are short-lived, self-resolving and don't require ongoing treatment. While each Australian child would have received 13 vaccinations by the time they reach two years of age, febrile seizures following vaccination accounted only for 6 per cent of all first febrile seizure presentations to hospital.

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2019-04/uos-prf042419.php

<40% of pregnant women getting flu vax

In Australia, less than 40% of pregnant women are being vaccinated against influenza, with women born overseas, those who smoke during pregnancy and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander women the least likely to be vaccinated, according to research published by the Medical Journal of Australia. "Factors associated with vaccination included greater maternal age, primigravidity, early antenatal care and GP-led care," wrote the authors, led by Stacey Rowe, principal epidemiologist at the Department of Health and Human Services and a PhD candidate at Monash University.

<https://www.hospitalhealth.com.au/content/clinical-services/news/-lt-40-of-pregnant-women-getting-flu-vax-1359194315>

Influenza: A real threat to young children

Children with pre-existing medical conditions have a higher likelihood of getting hospitalised for influenza. Of the 40% of children studied by Dawood, 18% had asthma, 15% (of those below two years) had been born prematurely, and 7% had developmental delay. However, this does not mean that other children are safe. A 25 year-long study of 1,665 healthy children found that influenza was associated with high death rates in otherwise healthy children aged below five years. Vaccination is the best way to prevent influenza.

<https://www.thestar.com.my/news/nation/2019/04/24/influenza-a-real-threat-to-young-children/>

Over 65's influenza news

Important vaccines for senior citizens

Seniors catch flu, shingles and pneumonia easily, apart from several other diseases. The infectious diseases if not treated immediately, can increase complications and can even be fatal. Thus, vaccinations are the best way to keep seniors protected from serious infections. Vaccines are not just for kids, they are equally imperative for senior citizens. Seniors above 65 years must opt for the flu vaccine designed for their age group in particular.

<https://www.deccanchronicle.com/lifestyle/health-and-wellbeing/240419/important-vaccines-for-senior-citizens.html>

Rapid response team to deal with flu outbreak

In Australia, a rapid response team is being mobilised in Sydney's west to prevent major flu outbreaks in aged care facilities. People over the age of 65 are at higher risk of complications from the influenza virus and the vaccine can be less effective as people age. A small team of research nurses led by infectious diseases expert Professor Robert Booy is responding to suspected outbreaks by visiting aged care facilities and using portable technology to diagnose the flu more rapidly.

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/nsw-news-flu-outbreak-aged-care/e44f4a75-c6b3-4060-a3f4-6e9c9de72187>

General Influenza News

Tasmanian flu cases continue to rise, as state government puts final touches on winter plan

As the number of flu cases in Tasmania continues to rise, the state government says it is in the final stages of developing a winter plan. There have already been 490 reported cases of influenza in Tasmania this year, compared to 452 for the whole of 2018. Health Minister Michael Ferguson said the winter plan would ensure staff and patients were as supported and prepared as possible.

<https://www.examiner.com.au/story/6086414/winter-flu-plan-in-final-stages-of-development-says-government/>

How to boost your immune system

How can you improve your immune system? Getting vaccines, playing in dirt and good sleep are better ways to boost an immune system than essential oils for instance. "The virus is weakened ... but it won't cause the illness," Dr. Daniel McGee, a pediatrician at Helen DeVos Children's Hospital in Grand Rapids, Michigan, told TODAY. Others, such as the flu vaccine, rely on a dead virus. While many patients say they received the flu vaccine and then got flu from it, they're mistaken. A dead virus can't cause the illness.

<https://www.today.com/health/how-boost-your-immune-system-t151511>

Tasmanian flu vaccines 'out of reach', according to Labor

Vaccinations remain out of reach for many Tasmanians, according to Labor, who have called on the state government to conduct a one-year trial for free flu vaccines. There have already been 490 reported cases of influenza in Tasmania this year, compared to 452 for the whole of 2018. While the government has yet to release details of its 2019 winter plan, Health Minister Michael Ferguson said Public Health Services was distributing vaccinations for vulnerable population and had been engaging with aged care facilities.

<https://www.examiner.com.au/story/6087739/labor-calls-for-one-year-trial-for-free-flu-vaccines/>

Local doctors warn of long flu season

In Vermont, just because it's warmer, doesn't mean the flu season is over. Doctors are seeing more cases this spring than this time last year. "We've had a similar number of cases the last few years. The one thing that seems different here and around the country is that influenza is lasting longer," said Dr. Tim Lahey, an infectious disease physician.

<https://www.wcax.com/content/news/Local-doctors-warn-of-long-flu-season-508994931.html>

Nutritious diet vital to fighting the winter flu

New Zealand has been hit with blustery cold weather over the last week, signalling the country is heading towards winter. With the cold always comes the flu, but Dr Cathy Stephenson told The AM Show there are a few things Kiwis can do to reduce their chances of getting sick. She recommends getting a flu shot and keeping vaccinated for illnesses that can strike any time of year, but especially winter.

<https://www.newshub.co.nz/home/lifestyle/2019/04/nutritious-diet-vital-to-fighting-the-winter-flu.html>

Burden of disease

H1N1 kills two women in Mumbai

Two H1N1 deaths were reported in the city of Mumbai in March. Brihanmumbai Municipal Corporation (BMC) officials said a 30-year-old woman from Agripada and a 65-year-old woman from Mazgaon succumbed to the disease. The State has recorded 1,346 positive H1N1 cases and 120 deaths this year so far.

<https://www.thehindu.com/news/cities/mumbai/h1n1-kills-two-women-in-mumbai/article26925925.ece>

Long flu season finally winding down in Texoma

Nationwide, the U.S. CDC estimates there have been as many as 57,000 flu deaths since October 1, with more than half a million Americans hospitalized. But in Grayson County, Texas, the worst appears to be over. "Locally, our cases are sporadic as far as even in the region," said Amanda Ortez of the Grayson County Health Department "They're sporadic throughout the State of Texas, and in some of the other states there's more activity." Last week, the Grayson County Health Department had four confirmed flu cases from rapid flu tests.

<http://www.kten.com/story/40355376/long-flu-season-finally-winding-down-in-texoma>

7 more flu deaths push total to 113

In Arkansas, seven more flu-related deaths were reported to the state in the past week, bringing the

death toll from the current flu season to 113, the state Department of Health reported. The most recent deaths were those of five people age 65 or older and two people age 45-64.

<https://www.arkansasonline.com/news/2019/apr/24/7-more-flu-deaths-push-total-to-113-201/>

Nashik: Swine flu claims 10 lives in a month

Nashik, India - Swine flu continues to claim lives across the district. Till April 15 this year, 25 people have died of swine flu in various government and private hospitals of the district. Until March 15, the district health machinery had registered 15 deaths. Ten people died of the flu since then, until April 15.

[https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nashik/nashik-swine-flu-claims-10-lives-in-a-month/articleshow/69019190.cm](https://timesofindia.indiatimes.com/city/nashik/nashik-swine-flu-claims-10-lives-in-a-month/articleshow/69019190.cms)

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The Worrying Trend In SA's Flu Spike

Reported flu cases in South Australia have spiked dramatically compared to at the same time last year, and many of the victims are children. SA Health's Dr Anne Koehler told FIVEaa on Wednesday: "The state government is so concerned about children that they're funding free vaccines for children under five. We've noticed that a lot of the cases are in young children this year."

<https://www.fiveaa.com.au/news/The-Worrying-Trend-In-SA-s-Flu-Spike>

Flu cases spike across the Yucatan

In Mexico, the number of cases of influenza grew significantly last week in the Yucatan, federal health authorities confirmed. According to reports from the National Epidemiological Surveillance System (Sinave), there are already 78 confirmed flu cases so far this season, an amount that increased significantly in just one week. Based on the information provided by the federal health authorities last week, 63 positive cases were reported. Despite this, Yucatán remains one of the states with the lowest incidence of influenza cases in Mexico.

<https://yucatanexpatlife.com/flu-cases-spike-across-the-yucatan/>

Flu crisis hits South Australia

South Australia is fighting a flu crisis, with record rates of influenza sweeping the state. There are reports of nearly 7500 confirmed cases, which is already seven times more than the worst year on record in 2017. Free flu vaccinations for children under five and people over 65 have been made available.

<https://www.weeklytimesnow.com.au/news/national/flu-crisis-hits-south-australia/video/6f132345c7f5523e73c402c71197e9b4>

Flu Surveillance in Animals

New avian flu virus detected in Cambodia

An H5N6 variant of the highly pathogenic avian influenza (HPAI) virus has been detected for the first time in poultry in Cambodia, and new cases have been confirmed in Mexico, Nigeria, and Taiwan.

<https://www.wattagnet.com/articles/37509-new-avian-flu-virus-detected-in-cambodia>

Bird flu in Namibia's penguins wanes, after killing nearly 500

For more than three months, penguins living off the coast of Namibia have been battling an outbreak of bird flu. The worst of the disease seems to have passed, but hundreds of birds have died, said Jessica Kemper, an independent conservation biologist in Lüderitz, Namibia. "We might still get some mortalities, but hopefully the epidemic will be over in the next few weeks," Kemper said. "Luckily the virus didn't go completely wild, and unless it flares up again or another potentially catastrophic event takes place (think oil spill), the population should recover."

<https://news.mongabay.com/2019/04/bird-flu-in-namibian-penguins-wanes-after-killing-nearly-500/>