

Seqirus Media Monitoring

1st Apr 2020

Seqirus mentions

Flu - CHMP gives Seqirus adjuvanted quadrivalent vaccine the OK

Seqirus announced that its adjuvanted quadrivalent influenza vaccine (aQIV) - launching as FLUAD® TETRA - has received a positive opinion from the Committee for Medicinal Products for Human Use of the European Medicines Agency, recommending the approval of the marketing authorisation application for use in people aged 65 years and above. "This positive CHMP opinion takes us one step closer to fulfilling our commitment to bring our adjuvanted quadrivalent vaccine to Europe," said Dr Raja Rajaram, Head of EMEA Medical Affairs for Seqirus.

https://www.adnkronos.com/soldi/economia/2020/03/31/influenza-chmp-vaccino-quadrivalente-adiuvato-seqirus_pLKGgiGVYnAb4UZSdZRbDL.html?refresh_ce

Additional sources: ([PharmaStar](#)) ([AboutPharma](#)) ([Medscape](#)) ([NewsDio](#))

World-first flu vaccine rolled out free for seniors

In Australia, a world-first free seasonal flu vaccine will be available for up to four million seniors aged over 65 years from today as the Federal Government urges all Australians to protect themselves. While the new four-strain Fluad Quad shot does not protect against the coronavirus pandemic, medicos believe it will help doctors diagnose between the novel disease and seasonal flu. The Therapeutic Goods Association fast-tracked the application for Fluad Quad, meaning Australia has become the first country in the world to offer the vaccine.

<https://www.couriermail.com.au/coronavirus/worldfirst-flu-vaccine-rolled-out-free-for-seniors/news-story/b2c6bcb09ae8acc481492527e54f7ae6>

Additional sources: ([Australian Financial Review](#)) ([Adelaide Now](#)) ([The Weekly Times](#)) ([Daily Mercury](#)) ([Townsville Bulletin](#)) ([West Australian](#)) ([Herald Sun](#)) ([News.com.au](#))

Coronavirus sees flu shots fly off shelves

In Australia, Pharmacists say they have seen a huge surge in people getting flu shots, outpacing last season's demand. Medicos are reminding Australians to get vaccinated for flu early this year to ease pressure on the health system, which is under pressure from the coronavirus pandemic. Pharmaceutical Society of Australia president Chris Freeman says members are reporting huge demand. Vaccine manufacturer Seqirus has previously told AAP it would be able to meet Australian demand, including the separate flu shot for over-65s.

<https://www.illawarramercury.com.au/story/6704398/coronavirus-sees-flu-shots-fly-off-shelves/?cs=2388>

Additional sources: ([News.com.au](#))

Industry News

Novavax names manufacturing partner for flu vaccine

Emergent BioSolutions has inked another deal with fellow Gaithersburg biotech Novavax — this time, for its seasonal flu vaccine. The agreement means Emergent will develop and manufacture NanoFlu, the influenza vaccine which Novavax successfully pushed through phase 3 clinical trials in a critical win announced March 24. It also comes just a few weeks after the two companies teamed up to get a COVID-19 vaccine to the clinic in the race against the pandemic. Novavax has yet to earn approval from the FDA for NanoFlu. That timeline still needs to be nailed down, Dr. Gregory Glenn, Novavax's president of research and development, said last week.

<https://www.bizjournals.com/washington/news/2020/03/31/novavax-names-manufacturing-partner-for-flu.html>

FDA to Review Baloxavir for Pediatric Use, Postexposure Prophylaxis of Influenza

The Food and Drug Administration has accepted for review the supplemental New Drug Application for baloxavir marboxil (Xofluza; Genentech) for the treatment of acute uncomplicated influenza in otherwise healthy children aged 1 to 12 years who have been symptomatic for 48 hours.

<https://www.infectiousdiseaseadvisor.com/home/topics/respiratory/influenza/fda-to-review-baloxavir-for-pediatric-use-postexposure-prophylaxis-of-influenza/>

ExpreS2ion Announces SEK 6.7 Mln Grant For Development Influenza Vaccine

ExpreS2ion Biotechnologies announced that the international next-generation influenza vaccine consortium INDIGO, led by the University of Amsterdam with ExpreS2ion as a participating member, has been awarded a 10.0 MEUR Horizon 2020 grant from the EU. ExpreS2ion's participation is directly awarded 0.6 MEUR (approx. 6.7 MSEK) of this grant, which is estimated to be recognised as revenue evenly from H2 2020 through H2 2021.

<https://www.reuters.com/article/brief-expres2ion-announces-sek-67-mln-gr/brief-expres2ion-announces-sek-67-mln-grant-for-development-influenza-vaccine-idUSFWN2BO0ES>

Pandemic Influenza News

The Lancet Infectious Diseases: Comprehensive COVID-19 hospitalization and death rate estimates help countries best prepare as global pandemic unfolds

First comprehensive estimates from mainland China of the proportion of people with COVID-19 who required hospitalisation, and latest death rate estimates, both show sharp increases with age. Authors warn that without intervention the number of people needing hospital treatment is likely to overwhelm even the most advanced healthcare systems worldwide, though caution that as the pandemic unfolds, it is possible that outcomes could improve and it will be important to revise estimates in this study. The new analysis also finds that the estimated proportion of deaths from both diagnosed cases and from milder, unconfirmed cases is strongly influenced by age. The estimates are slightly lower than others that have been made for the virus, but are still much higher than for previous pandemics such as 2009 pandemic influenza H1N1, which was estimated to be fatal in around 0.02% of cases

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-03/tl-pss_1033020.php

Academic studies

Researchers develop chemically modified phage capsid that "stifles" influenza viruses

A new approach brings the hope of new therapeutic options for suppressing seasonal influenza and avian flu: On the basis of an empty - and therefore non-infectious - shell of a phage virus, researchers from Berlin have developed a chemically modified phage capsid that "stifles" influenza viruses. Perfectly fitting binding sites cause influenza viruses to be enveloped by the phage capsids in such a way that it is practically impossible for them to infect lung cells any longer. This phenomenon has been proven in pre-clinical trials, also involving human lung tissue. Researchers from the Leibniz-Forschungsinstitut für Molekulare Pharmakologie (FMP), Freie Universität Berlin,

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20200331/Researchers-develop-chemically-modified-phage-capsid-that-e2809cs.tifese2809d-influenza-viruses.aspx>

Additional sources: (Genetic Engineering & Biotechnology News)

€450 million for Europe's long-term frontier research

The 185 winners of the annual ERC Advanced Grants competition have been announced today. They will explore their most daring and innovative ideas proposed in response to last year's call. The new research projects, apart from strengthening Europe's knowledge base, will also lead to creation of some 1,800 new jobs for post-doctoral fellows, PhD students and other research staff. These researchers' work covers all fields of research, including 'What can we learn from the evolution of flu viruses?'

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-03/erc-mf033020.php

Pediatric influenza news

No News Recorded

Over 65's influenza news

Ayr care home battles outbreak of coronavirus just months after flu deaths shut its doors

In Ayrshire, a care home which suffered a deadly outbreak of flu just months ago has been hit by the coronavirus. Two positive cases of the bug have been confirmed at Ayr's Glenfairn Care Home. And at least 12 residents have been placed in isolation after showing symptoms of the disease. The home on Racecourse Road was temporarily closed to new admissions in September when a number of residents died following respiratory problems. Now it is at the centre of a new scare with large parts of the privately owned facility, which houses up to 75 residents, on lockdown.

<https://www.dailyrecord.co.uk/ayrshire/ayr-care-home-battles-outbreak-21787602>

General Influenza News

Australians told to get flu jab this month

Australians are being urged to get the flu shot this month so they don't contract the disease and coronavirus at the same time. More than 13.5 million doses of seasonal influenza vaccine have been secured for the national program. "Vaccinating against the flu will reduce the risk of a very dangerous double-up of flu and coronavirus - both diseases affecting the respiratory system," Health Minister Greg Hunt said on Wednesday. "Fewer cases and fewer severe cases of flu will result in less demand on our health care system."

<https://www.seymourtelegraph.com.au/national/2020/04/01/1110163/australians-told-to-get-flu-jab-this-month>

Additional sources: ([News.com.au](https://www.news.com.au))

Forest Hill Family Clinic offers 'drive-through' flu shots amid COVID-19 pandemic

Medical experts are urging Australians to get their flu vaccine as soon as possible - but a doctor's waiting room is the last place anyone wants to be during this pandemic. So Forest Hill Family Clinic in Melbourne's east has taken its immunisation operation outside, setting up a drive-through flu vaccination clinic. Nurse Cass Quilty says existing patients simply book in and then drive in for their appointments. Forest Hill Family Clinic staff are hoping other GPs follow their lead. "This is an opportunity to show other clinics it can be done you don't need much," Ms Quilty said.

<https://www.9news.com.au/national/flu-shot-melbourne-forest-hill-clinic-offers-drive-through-vaccines-coronavirus/1d138415-8a91-4505-86da-3fa37e094fb5>

Coronavirus: Flu vaccine not available for at-risk groups due to supply issues

In New Zealand, doctors' clinics around the country are running out of flu vaccine, leaving at-risk groups unimmunised. A Christchurch woman with a heart condition, putting her at greater risk of flu and flu complications, heard this week vaccines were "currently unavailable" at her GP clinic. She isn't alone - medical director for the College of GPs, Dr Bryan Betty said practices across New Zealand were feeling the squeeze due to increased demand amidst the coronavirus pandemic. It comes as New Zealand ramped up the number of flu jabs available this year by nearly half a million, after last year saw record demand.

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/health/coronavirus/120701649/coronavirus-flu-vaccine-not-available-for-atrisk-groups-due-to-supply-issues>

Join flu tracker website and report any flu symptoms early

Influenza is a significant public health issue in New Zealand with 10-20 per cent of all New Zealanders getting infected and Covid-19 is already putting pressure on the health system. Some become so unwell from the 'ordinary' flu, they need hospital care and on average, about 400 people

die from influenza or complications relating to it each year. It's very worthwhile to consider alternative ways of understanding influenza trends so that the health authorities can be better prepared for this highly contagious disease. The information FluTracking gathers is confidential and identifiable data isn't shared.

https://www.nzherald.co.nz/manawatu-guardian/news/article.cfm?c_id=1503567&objectid=12321292

What is the Difference Between COVID-19 and the Flu?

COVID-19 and influenza are both infectious respiratory illnesses. Though the symptoms of these two diseases seem similar, they are caused by different viruses. While many people often compare COVID-19 to the flu, there are many differences between them. There are effective vaccines and therapeutics for flu or influenza, but at present, there are no available vaccines and drugs for COVID-19. While there are several clinical trials and more than 20 vaccines in development underway for COVID-19, there are no approved vaccines or treatments for the illness.

<https://www.news-medical.net/health/What-is-the-Difference-Between-COVID-19-and-the-Flu.aspx>

Burden of disease

News Scan for Mar 31, 2020

Flu activity in many parts of the Northern Hemisphere continues to decline, though influenza-like illness markers remained high or rose in some countries, the World Health Organization said in its latest global flu update. The high and rising levels of ILI in the face of declining flu positive tests probably reflects the COVID-10 pandemic, though the report did not address that connection. The WHO did say, however, that during the reporting period, which covers the first half of March, several countries tested routine flu surveillance specimens, and some found COVID-19 positives, a practice it encourages if resources are available.

<http://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/03/news-scan-mar-31-2020>

Coronavirus death rate is lower than previously reported, study says, but it's still deadlier than seasonal flu

How many people die after being infected with the novel coronavirus? Fewer than previously calculated, according to a study released Monday, but still more than die from the flu. The research, published in the medical journal *The Lancet Infectious Diseases*, estimated that about 0.66% of those infected with the virus will die. That coronavirus death rate, which is lower than earlier estimates, takes into account potentially milder cases that often go undiagnosed -- but it's still far higher than the 0.1% of people who are killed by the flu.

<https://www.cnn.com/2020/03/30/health/coronavirus-lower-death-rate/index.html>

As NYC Nears 1,000 COVID-19 Deaths, How Does Pandemic Compare to Typical Flu Season?

New York had 4,749 deaths as a result of influenza and pneumonia in 2018, according to the CDC. The New York City Department of Health said that roughly 2,000 of those deaths happen within the five boroughs every year. If divided equally over the course of a year, slightly under 400 New Yorkers died each month in 2018 from the flu or pneumonia, around 167 of whom were in the city. It is consistently one of the top five causes of death in the state and NYC. Comparatively, if the number of New Yorkers who died as a result of COVID-19 in March was multiplied over the course of a year, the state could see more than 18,000 people die as a result — making it the third-leading cause of death behind heart disease and cancer, and well ahead of any other cause.

<https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/as-nyc-nears-1000-covid-19-deaths-how-does-it-compare-to-typical-flu-seasons/2352180/>

Flu Surveillance in Animals

No News Recorded