

Seqirus Media Monitoring

11th Jun 2020

Seqirus mentions

First adjuvanted quadrivalent influenza vaccine receives EU approval

The European Commission has given regulatory approval for the first adjuvanted quadrivalent influenza vaccine to become available across Europe. This new vaccine builds on the well-established technology used in an existing adjuvanted trivalent influenza vaccine (aTIV) available in several European countries. aTIV has demonstrated higher effectiveness in people aged 65+ years compared to standard, non-adjuvanted trivalent influenza vaccines. The new adjuvanted quadrivalent vaccine (aQIV) will be manufactured in Liverpool, UK, by Seqirus, one of Europe's largest influenza vaccine producers and a global leader in influenza prevention. 'In these times, even more than in most, it's important to have age appropriate vaccines to help protect against influenza,' said Dr Raja Rajaram, Head of Medical Affairs, Europe

<http://www.farmacista33.it/nuovo-vaccino-antinfluenzale-ue-approva-il-primo-quadrivalente-adiuvato/pianeta-farmacista/news--53509.html>

Additional sources: (DAZ Online) (today.it) (Sanihelp.it) (ClicMedicina.it) (Yahoo Italy) (SardiniaPost) (La Sicilia) (Journal MED)

CEPI, CSL and University of Queensland partner on COVID-19 vaccine candidate

The University of Queensland (UQ) has partnered up with CSL and the Coalition for Epidemic Preparedness Innovations (CEPI) to accelerate development, manufacturing, and distribution of a COVID-19 vaccine candidate its researchers pioneered earlier this year. The UQ COVID-19 vaccine will be combined with Seqirus' adjuvant technology, MF59, to improve immune response, reduce the amount of antigen required for vaccines, and allow more doses to be manufactured quicker.

<https://homelandprepnews.com/stories/50518-cepi-csl-and-university-of-queensland-partner-on-covid-19-vaccine-candidate/>

Warning to keep up shingles vaccinations

Older Australians are being urged to keep having free shingles vaccinations—along with their annual flu injection—to keep pushing down the incidence of the painful chicken pox-related condition. The independent Australian study was funded by Seqirus. The authors included a Seqirus employee and advisory board members.

<https://medicalxpress.com/news/2020-06-shingles-vaccinations.html>

Industry News

NIH Report on Phase 2 Clinical Trial of BiondVax's M-001 Universal Influenza Vaccine Candidate Concludes Both Primary Endpoints Achieved

BiondVax announced the completion of the clinical study report of a Phase 2 clinical trial of the Company's M-001 universal influenza vaccine candidate. The trial in 120 adult volunteers was supported by the U.S. NIAID. As indicated when the preliminary trial data was published earlier this year, both primary objectives of the trial, to assess the safety and T cell immune responses to M-001, were achieved. The CSR concludes that "M-001 was safe in this study" and that "M-001 induced significant polyfunctional T cell responses." In parallel, BiondVax's pivotal, clinical efficacy, Phase 3 trial in Europe is ongoing.

<https://www.prnewswire.com/il/news-releases/nih-report-on-phase-2-clinical-trial-of-biondvaxs-m-001-universal-influenza-vaccine-candidate-concludes-both-primary-endpoints-achieved-301073580.html>

Additional sources: ([Reuters](#))

RIV3 flu vaccine safe for routine use in all adults

A phase 4 post-marketing study of RIV3, a recombinant trivalent influenza vaccine, demonstrated no safety concerns regarding its use in adults. "This safety study was done as a commitment made by the manufacturer of the trivalent recombinant influenza vaccine (RIV3) to the FDA after it was approved in 2014," John Hansen, MPH, adverse event coordinator and project manager at Kaiser Permanente Vaccine Study Center, told Healio.

<https://www.healio.com/news/infectious-disease/20200609/riv3-flu-vaccine-safe-for-routine-use-in-all-adults>

Cepheid developing test to distinguish COVID-19 from flu

Cepheid said it's developing a single test to detect SARS-CoV-2, Flu A, Flu B and RSV with the aim of making it available for the next flu season. The Danaher molecular diagnostics subsidiary said it plans to pursue the FDA's emergency use authorization pathway for the four-in-one combination test.

<https://www.medtechdive.com/news/cepheid-developing-test-to-distinguish-covid-19-from-flu/579524/>

Pandemic Influenza News

No News Recorded

Academic studies

Flu vaccine coverage linked to reduced antibiotic prescribing

Up to 76 percent of all outpatient antibiotic prescriptions in the United States may be inappropriate, with peak prescribing associated with the flu season. Evidence suggests that influenza vaccines may reduce overall and inappropriate antibiotic use by reducing the burden of influenza-like illness commonly mistreated with antibiotics, as well as preventing secondary bacterial infections. While flu vaccines have been proven to reduce severe illness, evidence is lacking on the link between flu vaccination and antibiotic prescribing at the population level in the US.

https://www.eurekalert.org/pub_releases/2020-06/cfdd-fvc061020.php

Additional sources: ([Medical Xpress](#))

Pollen contributes to flu and COVID-19 seasonality

Pollen is known to be an antiviral substance, and also has anti-influenza and allergenic effects. It is also known to activate the immune system. Dutch researchers identified pollen as one of the factors that independently act to reduce the incidence of flu-like epidemics over the period 2016 to 2019 in the Netherlands. The current study is based on the finding that pollen and flu seasons are consistently and predictably found to follow each other each year in countries within a temperate climate zone, which cannot be explained by purely meteorological factors. The beginning and ending of moderate flu-like epidemics and of the current COVID-19 pandemic is also found to mirror the points in time when allergenic pollen grain release crosses a threshold of about 100 grains/m³ per week.

<https://www.news-medical.net/news/20200610/Pollen-contributes-to-flu-and-COVID-19-seasonality.aspx>

Pediatric influenza news

No News Recorded

Over 65's influenza news

More flu vaccinations equal fewer antibiotic prescriptions for seniors, say investigators

A new study has tied a 10% increase in influenza vaccinations to significant reductions in antibiotic prescribing rates. Investigators analyzed outpatient antibiotic prescribing rates and flu vaccinations from January to March each year from 2010 to 2017. When vaccination coverage increased by 10%,

overall antibiotic use dropped by 6.5%, they reported. This included a 5.2% reduction among the elderly. "Expanding influenza vaccination could be an important intervention to reduce unnecessary antibiotic prescribing," the authors concluded.

<https://www.mcknight.com/news/clinical-news/more-flu-vaccinations-equal-fewer-antibiotic-prescriptions-for-seniors-say-investigators/>

General Influenza News

Analysis: Make flu shots available for all Quebecers this year

It seemed odd Health Minister Danielle McCann would emphasize the importance of the annual flu vaccination campaign on Tuesday, months before the seasonal influenza virus sweeps through Quebec and the rest of Canada. But McCann suggested this year's flu shots will likely be more important than ever in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The thinking is that the coronavirus will continue to circulate in Quebec in the months to come, causing sporadic outbreaks in the community and in hospitals.

<https://o.canada.com/diseases-and-conditions/coronavirus/analysis-make-flu-shots-available-for-all-quebecers-this-year/wcm/f3e46fc3-8f13-42d5-9983-a892fee1c61c>

Additional sources: (MSN.com)

Italy - Covid-19 outbreaks will make flu season worse as both share common symptoms. A call to get your flu shot

In Italy, while waiting for a vaccine for Covid-19, general practitioners are preparing for the next flu vaccination campaign, which in all likelihood could be anticipated between September and October. Preparing in advance this year could be a "very useful" strategy to avoid one of the issues we had at the beginning of Covid-19, when many cases were confused for traditional forms of the flu. The flu vaccine, as indicated by a circular from the Ministry of Health, will not be mandatory but recommended and free of charge for all children from 6 months to 6 years old and for all the elderly from 60 years of age.

<https://www.insalutenews.it/in-salute/focolai-di-covid-19-si-sommeranno-allinfluenza-stagionale-stessi-sintomi-appello-alla-vaccinazione-antinfluenzale/>

New World COVID-19 hot spots eye upcoming flu, hurricane seasons

The head of the World Health Organization (WHO) today addressed unknowns surrounding asymptomatic spread, as surges continue in several hot spots, including Brazil, amid warnings that the upcoming Southern Hemisphere flu season and the hurricane season pose extra challenges to countries grappling with COVID-19. Carissa Etienne, MBBS, MSc, the director of the WHO's Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), said that flu vaccination this season is important, especially for high-risk groups, adding that PAHO is helping countries buy vaccine through its revolving fund, which helped secure 24 million doses.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/06/new-world-covid-19-hot-spots-eye-upcoming-flu-hurricane-seasons>

Employers Should Mandate Flu Vaccines to Mitigate Pandemic

As businesses reopen, mandatory influenza vaccination policies should be part of the game plan, argues Debbie Kaminer, professor of law at Baruch College's Zicklin School of Business. She says private businesses have significant legal freedom to adopt such policies and only minimal medical and religious exemptions are required under federal law.

<https://news.bloomberglaw.com/daily-labor-report/insight-employers-should-mandate-flu-vaccines-to-mitigate-pandemic>

Coronavirus outbreak: WHO says southern hemisphere entering flu season, unknown how coronavirus will behave

World Health Organization (WHO) executive director Dr. Michael Ryan on Wednesday said the southern hemisphere is entering its typical influenza season as winter approaches, and that it's still unknown how the novel coronavirus will behave in terms of seasonality.

<https://globalnews.ca/video/7049827/coronavirus-outbreak-who-says-southern-hemisphere-entering-flu-season-unknown-how-coronavirus-will-behave>

Burden of disease

Flu cases at record low as Mandurah forecasts average winter

COVID-19 restrictions appear to have had an effect on influenza with record lows in WA. The Department of Health has detected 39 cases of influenza in WA in the past two months, which is the lowest recorded in the State's history for this period since the introduction of routine influenza testing. In April and May, 2018 there were 347 cases, with cases surging to 3,327 in April and May of last year. A total of 893,327 West Australians have received an influenza vaccination since March, an increase of 415,529 compared to the same period last year

<https://www.perthnow.com.au/community-news/mandurah-coastal-times/flu-cases-at-record-low-as-mandurah-forecasts-average-winter-c-1072143>

Flu Surveillance in Animals

News Scan for Jun 10, 2020 - H5N8 avian flu in Hungarian poultry

Hungarian veterinary officials reported six more highly pathogenic H5N8 outbreaks in poultry, part of sporadic similar detections over the past few months, according to a Jun 8 notification from the World Organization for Animal Health (OIE). The outbreaks all occurred at farms in Bacs-Kiskun County in central Hungary.

<https://www.cidrap.umn.edu/news-perspective/2020/06/news-scan-jun-10-2020>