

HSE NATIONAL IMMUNISATION OFFICE

IMMUNISATION BULLETIN 66

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COVID-19 vaccination

Fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccine

- In order for those aged 70 and older, those living in long term care facilities for older adults, and those aged 5 years or older with immunocompromise associated with a suboptimal response to vaccination to be considered fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccine, these groups should have completed (at a minimum):
 - the primary vaccination schedule
 - and have received a first booster COVID-19 vaccine dose
 - and a Spring booster COVID-19 vaccine dose.
- Being fully vaccinated with COVID-19 vaccine for most other groups means having completed the primary vaccination schedule and having received one booster COVID-19 vaccine (i.e. a first booster COVID-19 vaccine dose) - no further booster doses are recommended until the autumn when people will be notified about the eligible groups for autumn booster COVID-19 vaccines.
- For pregnant adolescents and adults, a COVID-19 booster vaccine is recommended once in pregnancy. If a pregnant person has not had a previous COVID-19 booster, the first booster dose is recommended at least four months after their last COVID-19 vaccine dose or SARS-CoV-2 infection. For pregnant persons who have had a booster prior to pregnancy, they should receive a booster once in pregnancy at an interval of six months or more since their last booster dose or SARS-CoV-2 infection. Booster doses can be given at any stage in pregnancy but ideally should be given between 20-34 weeks. If it is more than 12 months since their previous COVID-19 vaccine or infection administration earlier in pregnancy should be considered. For those who are pregnant and are immunocompromised, a second booster dose within the same pregnancy may be considered if six months has elapsed since their last booster dose or SARS-CoV-2 infection.

 For more information, [see Table 5a.1 NIAC Immunisation Guidelines for Ireland, Chapter 5a COVID-19](#)

Available COVID-19 Vaccines

The COVID-19 vaccine currently available for pregnant women, primary courses and 1st booster COVID-19 vaccine doses is Comirnaty® BA4-5.

Comirnaty® BA 4-5 (1 box containing 10 vials, each vial contains 6 doses (60 doses per box)) is available to order for the limited cohorts currently eligible.

Vaccines should be ordered online from <https://www.ordervaccines.ie/>. Deliveries are as per vaccine delivery calendar, please note the cut-off date (marked red on your calendar).

VidPrevtyn Beta® vaccine (which is licensed for use as a booster COVID-19 vaccine) is only available from HSE vaccination sites.

VidPrevtyn Beta® may be used as an alternate booster vaccine if there is a contraindication or precaution to an mRNA vaccine. This vaccine however is not licensed as a booster COVID-19 vaccine for those who have previously received a protein subunit vaccine (e.g. Nuvaxovid).

 [Order COVID-19 vaccines online](#) from the National Cold Chain Service website.

Primary Childhood Immunisation (PCI) programme

Infanrix Hexa

German pack Infanrix Hexa will be distributed during August. This presentation will be similar to the Irish pack (10 pre-filled syringes + 10 vials per box), but it will not contain needles.

The German box of Infanrix Hexa will be in a plastic bag with 20 needles (25Gx25mm), 10 PILs and 1 CIU (Caution in Use) letter.

Please see photo:



Please only order exactly what you require until your next delivery as the plastic bags may slide off each other and therefore they are not easy to store.

Irish pack Infanrix Hexa is expected to be available during September 2023.

PCI programme updates continue on page 4



PCI programme (cont. from page 3)

Common Queries

If a parent is diagnosed with hepatitis B, do their children who are already vaccinated with 6 in 1 require serology?

No. The NIAC do not advise that children who received hepB vaccine in 6 in 1 vaccine require serology in this situation.

Serology is recommended only for very high-risk groups as listed below:

- Healthcare and public safety workers at high risk of exposure to blood or body fluids containing blood. This includes Healthcare Workers (HCWs) with direct patient contact, HCWs at risk of needle stick or sharps injury, and laboratory workers who draw or test blood.
- Immunocompromised persons.
- Infants born to HBsAg positive mothers.
- Sex or needle-sharing partners of HBsAg-positive person

What vaccines are recommended for a child aged 2 years or older who missed their 13 months vaccines?

Any child who missed the 13 months vaccines is recommended PCV13 vaccine up to the age of 2 years only and Hib and MenC vaccines up to the age of 10 years.

The National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) recommends combined Hib/MenC (Menitorix) vaccine for children for MenC and Hib catch up to the age of 10 years since 2016.

The SmPC information for Menitorix states this vaccine should not be used over the age of 2 years.

This differs from the advice given by the National Immunisation Advisory Committee (NIAC) immunisation guidelines.

Each chapter of the NIAC guidelines state:

“In some circumstances, advice in these guidelines may differ from that in the Summary of Product Characteristics of the vaccines. When this occurs, the recommendations in these guidelines, which are based on current expert advice from NIAC, should be followed”.



[Read NIAC Immunisation Guidelines of Ireland online at RCPI website.](#)

Both NIAC and the UK Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation (JCVI) recommend combined Hib/MenC in those over 2 years to prevent Meningococcal C and haemophilus influenzae type b disease.

What if the 6 in 1 vaccine is given without being reconstituted?

If the contents of the 6 in 1 syringe and the vial were not mixed before vaccination the child will have been vaccinated against tetanus, pertussis, polio and diphtheria and hepB, but not Hib.

If this happens the contents of the vial cannot be administered separately. The 6 in 1 Hib vaccine is only effective if the contents of the vial is mixed with the contents of the 6in1 syringe so the child requires a separate Hib vaccine.

However there is no single Hib vaccine available for the childhood immunisation schedule. The Hib/MenC (Menitorix®) vaccine is the only available vaccine to provide Hib vaccine in this circumstance.

Menitorix® is licensed from 6 weeks of age for both Hib and MenC vaccination. The vaccine can be given at any interval after the recent vaccines to protect the child.

If this error occurs at the 2 or 4 months visit and the Hib/MenC vaccine is administered the child will then not need the MenC vaccine at 6 months of age.

If this error happens at 6 months of age the Hib/MenC is the only vaccine available to give the child and the vaccine can be given at any time after the 6 in 1 and PCV13 vaccines.

PCI programme updates continue on page 5



PCI programme (cont. from page 4)

#KeepUpToDate campaign



This month we are reminding people about keeping up to date with their babies' vaccines.

The best way to prevent outbreaks of vaccine preventable diseases is by getting vaccinated on time.

We have developed messaging that you can share on social media. We have also worked with

- **Karen Canning, Practice Nurse** and
- **Caroline Carpenter, Assistant Director of Nursing**, from HSE Public Health Area A and
- **Sarah Barrett, Staff Nurse Health Protection** from HSE Public Health Area A on videos about your baby's vaccines.

You can help us spread the message by resharing our content on our social media.



[Read more about the campaign](#) on the NIO website.
[Download the campaign assets](#) from the NIO website.

Job vacancies

Would you like to join our team in Manor St, Dublin 7. We are currently recruiting for

3 Grade VI, ICT Support (closing date 11th August at 3pm)



[Read more about Grade VI, ICT Support](#) on the HSE website.

1 Pharmacist, Chief 1 (closing date 14th August at 12pm)



[Read more about Pharmacist, Chief 1](#) on the HSE website.

Website



[Visit our website](#)

Visit our website www.immunisation.ie regularly for information to support vaccinators and health professionals responding to queries.

HSeLanD Vaccination Training Programme



[Visit HSeLanD](#)

You will find programmes developed by our office by logging into your account on www.hseland.ie selecting **courses** then selecting **clinical skills** and finally selecting **National Immunisation Office**.



[Contact HSeLanD](#)

If you have any issues with the platform please contact HSeLand directly.

Do you have queries?



[Send your query](#)

Clinical queries from healthcare professionals can be directed to our dedicated email address

Should vaccines be exposed to temperatures outside of parameters please contact a National Immunisation Office pharmacist immediately. Contacts include:

- email pharmacynio@hse.ie
- Leah Gaughan: mobile 087 1881667
- Achal Gupta: mobile 087 4064810
- Cliona Kiersey: mobile 087 9915452

If you have a query about errors or changes to records on COVAX, please contact the Contact Management Programme on 01 240 8786.

Queries that are not clinical or technical cannot be answered by the National Immunisation Office



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