
SEASONAL INFLUENZA, H1N1 INFLUENZA, AND PNEUMOCOCCAL VACCINATION RECOMMENDATIONS: ADULT PATIENTS WITH CANCER

Seasonal Influenza and Novel H1N1 Influenza Vaccinations

- Administration of inactivated annual seasonal influenza vaccine and inactivated 2009 novel H1N1 monovalent vaccine is strongly recommended for all adult oncology patients, as well as for family members, caregivers and hospital/clinic staff in contact with patients.
- Highest priority groups:
 - patients on active cancer treatment;
 - patients who have been treated for cancer within the past year
 - BMT (blood and marrow transplant) patients ≥4 months post-transplant and receiving immune suppressant treatment
 - healthcare providers
- Next highest priority groups for vaccination:
 - family members
 - caregivers
- **Ideal** timing for patients on active cancer treatment is at least 10-14 days before the start of any potentially immune suppressing cancer treatment such as radiation or chemotherapy. Where not possible, vaccination *between* chemotherapy cycles is preferable to not vaccinating. Low platelets are not an absolute contraindication.

Vaccination can occur at any time for oncology patients, based on individual clinical judgment incorporating a patient's overall clinical situation.

Pneumococcal Vaccination

- Pneumococcal vaccination should be given to cancer patients receiving potentially immune suppressing cancer treatment(s). Preliminary evidence suggests pneumococcal pneumonia is overrepresented amongst H1N1 fatalities.
- Ideal timing for patients on active cancer treatment is the same as for influenza (above). Patients vaccinated while on immunosuppressive therapy (e.g. between chemotherapy cycles) or in the 2 weeks before starting therapy should be revaccinated at least 3 months after discontinuation of therapy.
- Re-immunization is recommended in asplenic patients and those with nephrotic syndrome every 5-10 years.

These recommendations were developed by AHS Cancer Care, in collaboration with key provincial Oncology experts.