



Protecting and improving the nation's health

21 August 2017

Dear Colleague,

Re: Hepatitis B vaccine for infants born to hepatitis B mothers- including hexavalent vaccine availability

There has been a shortage of hepatitis B vaccine impacting severely on U.K. supply. Ordering restrictions were put in place to protect paediatric vaccine for the neonatal selective immunisation programme (i.e. babies born to hepatitis B infected mothers). These infants remain the highest priority for timely post exposure vaccination at birth, 4 weeks and 8 weeks of age and, rather than delay vaccination, alternate products should be used (Table).

While shortages of monovalent paediatric vaccine continue, high risk babies (even if born before 1 August 2017) should receive the hexavalent vaccine - Infanrix hexa (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB) - at 8 weeks of age in place of their routine vaccination. The vaccine can now be ordered via ImmForm. To avoid confusion, such babies should also complete routine primary immunisation with Infanrix hexa.

All other infants born before 1 August should continue to receive the pentavalent vaccine (DTaP/IPV/Hib).

Vaccine stock reached very low levels during August, but is expected to improve in the coming months. Although current restrictions may prevent ordering stocks of vaccine, manufacturers will release individual doses of vaccine if the requester indicates that it is for at-risk infants or for other post exposure indications.

To order non-centrally supplied vaccines:

- For GSK contact: customercontactuk@gsk.com or 0800 221 441 option 2.
- For MSD contact: AAH customer services on 0344 5618899 for normal orders; AAH will direct the requester to call MSD customer services on 01992 452094 for exceptional orders above ordering restrictions.

We will continue to keep you posted of any further changes.

Kind regards

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Immunisation, Hepatitis, Blood Safety and Countermeasures Response

Table: Hepatitis B vaccines for at-risk babies

| AGE | VACCINE TYPES (in order of preference) | VACCINE TRADE NAME |
|-----------------|--|---|
| Birth | Monovalent hepatitis B paediatric vaccine Monovalent hepatitis B adult vaccine Combination hepatitis A/B paediatric vaccine Combination hepatitis A/B adult vaccine | EngerixB (10mcg) or HBVaxPRO (5mcg) EngerixB (20mcg) or HBVaxPRO (10mcg) Twinrix paediatric, Ambirix Twinrix adult |
| 4 weeks | Monovalent hepatitis B paediatric vaccine Monovalent hepatitis B adult vaccine Combination hepatitis A/B paediatric vaccine Combination hepatitis A/B adult vaccine | EngerixB (10mcg) or HBVaxPRO (5mcg) EngerixB (20mcg) or HBVaxPRO (10mcg) Twinrix paediatric, Ambirix Twinrix adult |
| 8 weeks | Hexavalent vaccine (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB) | Infanrix hexa |
| 12 weeks | Hexavalent vaccine (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB) | Infanrix hexa |
| 16 weeks | Hexavalent vaccine (DTaP/IPV/Hib/HepB) | Infanrix hexa |
| One year of age | Monovalent hepatitis B paediatric vaccine Monovalent hepatitis B adult vaccine Combination hepatitis A/B paediatric vaccine Combination hepatitis A/B adult vaccine | EngerixB (10mcg) or HBVaxPRO (5mcg) EngerixB (20mcg) or HBVaxPRO (10mcg) Twinrix paediatric, Ambirix Twinrix adult |

Note: Except for HBVaxPRO (Merck), vaccines are manufactured by GSK

Further resources:

For further information on implications and recommendations during hepatitis B shortages

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hepatitis-b-vaccine-recommendations-during-supply-constraints>

For information on the introduction of hexavalent vaccine into the routine childhood immunisation programme and implications for the selective neonatal programme see:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hexavalent-combination-vaccine-programme-guidance>

See also special hexa issue of Vaccine Update: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccine-update-issue-266-july-2017-special-edition>

PGDs for hepatitis B immunisation in infants:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hexavalent-vaccine-dtapipvhbhepb-infanrix-hexa-pgd-template>

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/hepatitis-b-vaccine-patient-group-direction-template>