

ALERT: Health Canada Lifts Suspension of Influenza Vaccines

October 31, 2012

Peterborough County-City
HEALTH UNIT
...because health matters!

The Public Health Agency of Canada is now advising health care professionals in possession of Fludac and Agriflu vaccines that they can start using them once again. The suspension was lifted on the two vaccines this morning after a review determined the vaccines are safe to use.

Those administering the vaccines are reminded to follow the product monograph. The products should also be shaken and checked for any white floating material before they are injected. Such material is not uncommon in vaccines and does not pose a risk to health.

The Health Canada suspension was purely precautionary and was issued late Friday after similar actions in Europe. Health Canada looked at the results of its own testing, conducted a health risk assessment, and reviewed information from its European partners and data submitted by Novartis in making its decision. None of the information reviewed indicated a safety issue. The Public Health Agency of Canada closely monitors for vaccination-related adverse events to detect potential safety issues in a timely manner. To date it has received no reports of serious or unexpected adverse events related to these vaccines.

The annual flu vaccine protects against the strains of the influenza virus that are expected to circulate that year. Ontarians are encouraged to get immunized in the fall. The earlier they get the shot, the earlier they are protected. The flu shot remains the most effective and safe way to ensure you and your family avoid getting sick with the flu this season.

More details about the lifting of the vaccine suspension can be found by visiting the "Alerts" page of the Healthcare Professionals section on the Health Unit's website at www.pcchu.ca.

For more information about the flu and Ontario's flu campaign, visit <http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/public/programs/publichealth/flu/>. Canadians can also learn more about fighting flu by getting a copy of *Fight Flu: Your Seasonal Flu Guide* by contacting 1 800 O-Canada or visiting www.fightflu.ca.

Questions? Call Vaccine Preventable Disease program Nurses at 705-743-1000.