

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### ***EAACI (European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology) recommendations for egg allergic patients regarding flu vaccination***

**Zurich, 26 October 2009 – EAACI, the largest European organisation in the field of allergy, immunology and asthma, presents its recommendations for egg allergic patients regarding seasonal influenza vaccination which are also applicable in the case of A/H1N1 vaccine.**

#### **Can egg allergic patients be vaccinated against Influenzae viruses?**

As the vaccination campaign against Influenza viruses begins, individuals allergic to egg, or parents whose children have egg allergy, ask whether injection of the vaccine may lead to severe allergic reactions.

Thus, vaccination of individuals that are or could be allergic is still a source of concern worldwide. This concern is even more pronounced when widespread vaccination programmes against the Influenza virus A/H1N1 are initiated.

#### **Why are the A/H1N1 or the seasonal Influenzae vaccines a source of concern?**

Modern vaccines, which include anti-flu vaccines, require to grow live virus on specific materials, where the virus multiplies before being collected, purified and killed chemically to manufacture the vaccine.

Viruses used to manufacture these flu vaccines are cultivated in embryonic chicken cells, i.e. in fertilised hen eggs. Very small quantities of egg proteins are thus likely to be present in the vaccines. In the large majority of cases, these traces are not sufficient to cause severe allergic reactions in individuals allergic to egg. However, those that are highly sensitive to egg, and that normally react with severe allergic reactions when they ingest egg, may be at risk.

The EU law authorizes a maximum of 1 microgram of egg albumin per vaccine. In theory this quantity does not present a danger to individuals allergic to egg. However EAACI recommends, that those individuals whose allergy to egg is proven (especially with a clinical history of severe allergic reactions including anaphylactic shock) **special precautions** consisting of **vaccination in a safe environment** should be taken. This would allow for diagnostic procedures confirming or rejecting the presence of allergy against any vaccine product. When severe allergy to egg albumin is suspected, the vaccination should be done in the presence of a medical staff, physician acquainted with dealing with severe allergic reactions, and the use of emergency procedures, in case of need. In rare cases, the vaccination may be contraindicated.



**About EAACI:**

EAACI - The European Academy of Allergy and Clinical Immunology is a non-profit organisation active in the field of allergic and immunologic diseases such as asthma, rhinitis, eczema, occupational allergy, food and drug allergy and anaphylaxis. EAACI was founded in 1956 in Florence and has become the largest medical association in Europe in the field of allergy and clinical immunology. It includes 5'500 individual members from 107 countries, as well as 40 National Allergy Societies.

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