



**HAL**  
open science

## Protective efficacy of seasonal influenza vaccination against seasonal and pandemic influenza virus infection during 2009 in Hong Kong.

Benjamin J Cowling, Sophia Ng, Edward S K Ma, Calvin K y Cheng, Winnie Wai, Vicky J Fang, Kwok-Hung Chan, Dennis K M Ip, Susan S Chiu, J S Malik Peiris, et al.

### ► To cite this version:

Benjamin J Cowling, Sophia Ng, Edward S K Ma, Calvin K y Cheng, Winnie Wai, et al.. Protective efficacy of seasonal influenza vaccination against seasonal and pandemic influenza virus infection during 2009 in Hong Kong.. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 2010, 51 (12), pp.1370-9. 10.1086/657311 . pasteur-00588902

**HAL Id: pasteur-00588902**

**<https://riip.hal.science/pasteur-00588902>**

Submitted on 27 Oct 2011

**HAL** is a multi-disciplinary open access archive for the deposit and dissemination of scientific research documents, whether they are published or not. The documents may come from teaching and research institutions in France or abroad, or from public or private research centers.

L'archive ouverte pluridisciplinaire **HAL**, est destinée au dépôt et à la diffusion de documents scientifiques de niveau recherche, publiés ou non, émanant des établissements d'enseignement et de recherche français ou étrangers, des laboratoires publics ou privés.

# Protective Efficacy of Seasonal Influenza Vaccination against Seasonal and Pandemic Influenza Virus Infection during 2009 in Hong Kong

Benjamin J. Cowling,<sup>1</sup> Sophia Ng,<sup>1</sup> Edward S. K. Ma,<sup>2</sup> Calvin K. Y. Cheng,<sup>1</sup> Winnie Wai,<sup>1</sup> Vicky J. Fang,<sup>1</sup> Kwok-Hung Chan,<sup>2</sup> Dennis K. M. Ip,<sup>1</sup> Susan S. Chiu,<sup>3</sup> J. S. Malik Peiris,<sup>2,4,a</sup> and Gabriel M. Leung<sup>1,a</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Infectious Disease Epidemiology Group, School of Public Health, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, Departments of <sup>2</sup>Microbiology and <sup>3</sup>Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine, The University of Hong Kong, and <sup>4</sup>HKU-Pasteur Research Centre, Hong Kong Special Administrative Region, China

(See the editorial commentary by Glezen, on pages 1380–1382.)

**Background.** The relationship between seasonal influenza vaccine and susceptibility to 2009 pandemic A/H1N1 virus infection is not fully understood.

**Methods.** One child 6–15 years of age from each of 119 households was randomized to receive 1 dose of inactivated trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine (TIV) or saline placebo in November 2008. Serum samples were collected from study subjects and their household contacts before and 1 month after vaccination (December 2008), after winter (April 2009) and summer influenza (September–October 2009) seasons. Seasonal and pandemic influenza were confirmed by serum hemagglutination inhibition, viral neutralization titers, and reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction performed on nasal and throat swab samples collected during illness episodes.

**Results.** TIV recipients had lower rates of serologically confirmed seasonal A/H1N1 infection (TIV group, 8%; placebo group, 21%;  $P = .10$ ) and A/H3N2 infection (7% vs 12%;  $P = .49$ ), but higher rates of pandemic A/H1N1 infection (32% vs 17%;  $P = .09$ ). In multivariable analysis, those infected with seasonal influenza A during the study had a lower risk of laboratory-confirmed pandemic A/H1N1 infection (adjusted odds ratio [OR], 0.35; 95% confidence interval [CI], 0.14–0.87), and receipt of seasonal TIV was unassociated with risk of pandemic A/H1N1 infection (adjusted OR, 1.11; 95% CI, 0.54–2.26).

**Conclusions.** TIV protected against strain-matched infection in children. Seasonal influenza infection appeared to confer cross-protection against pandemic influenza. Whether prior seasonal influenza vaccination affects the risk of infection with the pandemic strain requires additional study.

**Clinical trials registration.** ClinicalTrials.gov number NCT00792051.

Trivalent inactivated influenza vaccine (TIV) is effective in preventing infection and illness associated with influenza A and B viruses in children during seasons when the vaccine components closely match circulating strains [1]. On the basis of evidence from ecological studies [2, 3], intervention trials [4–10], and simulation models [11–14], some health authorities have recommended vaccination of school-age children against sea-

sonal and pandemic influenza, not only to directly protect those children, but also to confer indirect protection on the general community by reducing transmission [15, 16]. Approximately one-third of transmission is thought to occur within households [17, 18], and children are more likely than adults to transmit infection to household contacts [19, 20]. However, there have been few detailed individual-based studies of the indirect benefits to household contacts of vaccinating children [9, 10]. We therefore designed a randomized controlled trial to assess whether vaccinating children against seasonal influenza protects their household contacts. We began a pilot study of 120 households in 2008–2009, to be followed by a main study of 800 households in 2009–2010.

The pandemic (H1N1) 2009 virus emerged in North America and rapidly spread worldwide [21]. There has

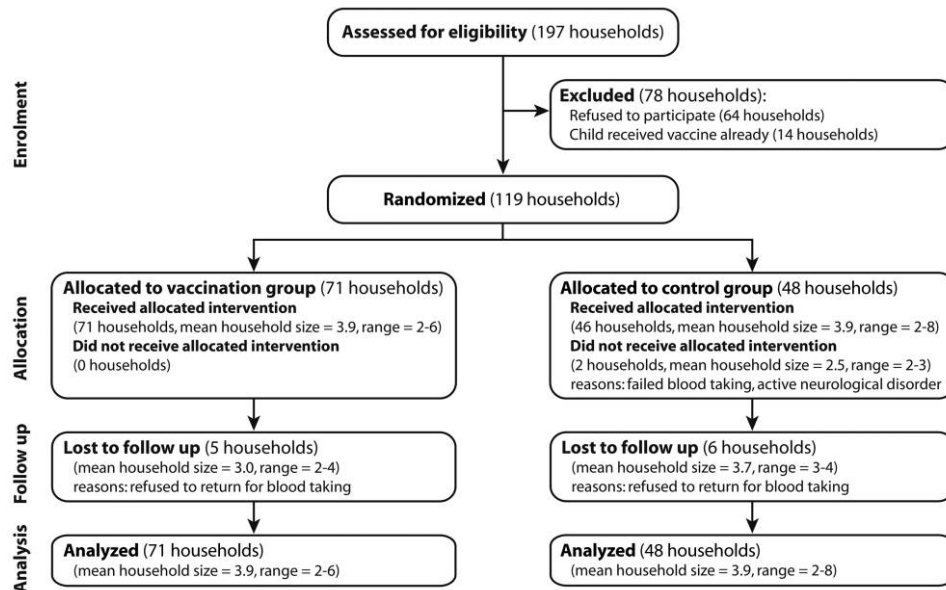
Received 24 July 2010; accepted 25 August 2010; electronically published 9 November 2010.

<sup>a</sup> J.S.M.P. and G.M.L. contributed equally to this article.

Reprints or correspondence: Dr Benjamin J. Cowling, School of Public Health, Li Ka Shing Faculty of Medicine, The University of Hong Kong, Units 624-7, Core F, Cyberport 3, Pokfulam, Hong Kong SAR, China (bcowling@hku.hk).

**Clinical Infectious Diseases** 2010;51(12):1370–1379

© 2010 by the Infectious Diseases Society of America. All rights reserved.  
1058-4838/2010/5112-0003\$15.00  
DOI: 10.1086/657311



**Figure 1.** Flow of participants through the study.

been intense interest in the effect of seasonal influenza vaccination on the risk of pandemic influenza infection, following results from a Canadian study that suggested that seasonal vaccine was associated with increased risk of pandemic influenza

[22]. Other studies have suggested that seasonal vaccine may confer no protection [23–25] or partial protection against the pandemic virus [26–28]. Taking advantage of the pilot study that was implemented during 2008–2009, and which thus cov-

**Table 1. Baseline Characteristics of Children who Received Trivalent Influenza Vaccine (TIV) or Placebo and their Household Contacts**

| Group, characteristic                               | TIV group     | Placebo group |
|---|---------------|---------------|
| <b>Study subjects</b>                               |               |               |
| No. of study subjects                               | 71            | 48            |
| Male sex  | 41 (58)       | 23 (48)       |
| <b>Age group</b>                                    |               |               |
| 6–8 years   | 20 (28)       | 16 (33)       |
| 9–11 years  | 42 (59)       | 28 (58)       |
| 12–15 years   | 9 (13)        | 4 (8)         |
| Received influenza vaccination for 2007–2008 season | 8 (11)        | 7 (15)        |
| <b>Household contacts</b>                           |               |               |
| No. of household contacts                           | 189           | 123           |
| Male sex  | 86 (46)       | 52 (42)       |
| <b>Age group</b>                                    |               |               |
| <15 years   | 47 (25)       | 26 (21)       |
| 16–45 years   | 94 (50)       | 69 (56)       |
| >45 years   | 48 (25)       | 28 (23)       |
| Received influenza vaccination for 2007–2008 season | 24 (13)       | 12 (10)       |
| Received influenza vaccination for 2008–2009 season | 9 (5)         | 5 (4)         |
| <b>Households</b>                                   |               |               |
| No. of households                                   | 71            | 48            |
| No. of individuals per household, mean $\pm$ SD     | 3.7 $\pm$ 0.9 | 3.6 $\pm$ 1.0 |
| Size of residence, mean $\pm$ SD, m <sup>2</sup>    | 48 $\pm$ 22.8 | 49 $\pm$ 23.6 |

**NOTE.** Data are no. (%) of study subjects, household contacts, or households, unless otherwise indicated. SD, standard deviation.

The figure is available in its entirety in the online edition of *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

**Figure 2.** Time line of vaccination and serum sample collection versus local surveillance data on influenza virus activity during the study period. Weekly proportions of positive influenza isolates are reported by Queen Mary Hospital, Hong Kong.

ered the first wave of the pandemic, we investigated the effect of vaccination against seasonal influenza on the risk of pandemic influenza infection. The results for the original research question concerning direct and indirect benefits of vaccinating children in the household setting will be separately reported on completion of the main phase.

## PATIENTS AND METHODS

**Recruitment and follow-up of participants.** Invitation letters were distributed via schools located within 3 km of our study clinic in Kowloon and to the families of members of a local birth cohort [29]. Households who expressed an interest in the study were assessed for their eligibility to participate and were invited to our study clinic. Eligible households included at least 1 child aged 6–15 years who did not have any contraindications against injection of inactivated influenza vaccine, including allergy or hypersensitivity to eggs or other substances contained in the vaccine. Children who were prescribed immunosuppres-

sive treatment or were otherwise immunocompromised were excluded.

One eligible child from each household was randomized to receive either a single dose of TIV (0.5 mL Vaxigrip; Sanofi Pasteur) or 0.5 mL of saline solution intramuscularly. The 2008–2009 TIV used in our study included the strains A/Brisbane/59/2007(H1N1)-like, A/Brisbane/10/2007(H3N2)-like, and B/Florida/4/2006. We hypothesized that vaccine-naive children aged 6–8 years in Hong Kong may be more influenza-experienced than those in Western temperate climates [30] and thus might only require 1 vaccine dose, because a prior influenza infection could have already primed their immune system.

Serum specimens were collected from study subjects at baseline immediately before vaccination (November–December 2008), 1 month after vaccination, after the winter influenza season (“mid-season”; April 2009) and at the end of the follow-up period (August–October 2009). Serum specimens were also collected from all household contacts at baseline, at mid-season, and post-season.

All subjects and household contacts were instructed to record the presence of any systemic and respiratory symptoms in a symptom diary daily throughout the study. Telephone calls were made monthly outside influenza seasons and fortnightly within season to monitor for any acute respiratory illnesses. Households were also reminded to report any acute respiratory illnesses to the study hotline as soon as possible after illness onset. Home visits were triggered by the presence of any 2 symptoms

**Table 2. Antibody Titers against Seasonal A/H1N1, Seasonal A/H3N2, and Pandemic A/H1N1 Virus before and 1 Month after Receipt of Trivalent Inactivated Vaccine (TIV) or Placebo**

| Virus, antibody  | TIV group<br>(n = 71) | Placebo group<br>(n = 48) | P <sup>a</sup> |
|--|-----------------------|---------------------------|----------------|
| <b>Seasonal A/H1N1</b>   |                       |                           |                |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 before vaccination, % of subjects                 | 49                    | 59                        | .44            |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 one month after vaccination, % of subjects        | 93                    | 68                        | <.01           |
| Geometric mean titer increase from before to 1 month after vaccination | 45                    | 1.8                       | <.01           |
| <b>Seasonal A/H3N2</b>   |                       |                           |                |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 before vaccination, % of subjects                 | 45                    | 55                        | .39            |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 1 month after vaccination, % of subjects          | 97                    | 61                        | <.01           |
| Geometric mean titer increase from before to 1 month after vaccination | 46.2                  | 1.4                       | <.01           |
| <b>Seasonal B</b>  |                       |                           |                |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 before vaccination % of subjects                  | 86                    | 93                        | .32            |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 one month after vaccination % of subjects         | 99                    | 91                        | .15            |
| Geometric mean titer increase from before to 1 month after vaccination | 7.8                   | 1.1                       | <.01           |
| <b>Pandemic A/H1N1</b>   |                       |                           |                |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 before vaccination % of subjects                  | 0                     | 0                         | >.99           |
| Antibody titer ≥1:40 1 month after vaccination % of subjects           | 0                     | 0                         | >.99           |
| Geometric mean titer increase from before to 1 month after vaccination | 1.3                   | 1.1                       | .02            |

**NOTE.** Antibody titers to the vaccine strains A/Brisbane/59/2007 (H1N1), A/Brisbane/10/2007 (H3N2), and B/Florida/4/2006 were measured by hemagglutination inhibition, and antibody responses to A/California/04/2009 (H1N1) were measured by viral neutralization.

<sup>a</sup> P values were calculated by  $\chi^2$  tests and Wilcoxon signed-rank tests.

---

The figure is available in its entirety in the online edition of *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

---

**Figure 3.** Antibody responses against seasonal and pandemic influenza viruses before (*gray circles*) and 1 month after (*black circles*) receipt of inactivated trivalent seasonal influenza vaccine (TIV) or placebo. Medians values and interquartile ranges are indicated by tick marks and vertical lines, and *P* values for comparisons between groups are displayed.

or signs of fever  $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , chills, headache, sore throat, cough, presence of phlegm, coryza, or myalgia in any household member. During home visits, nasal and throat swab samples were collected from all household members regardless of illness. Home visits were repeated at 3-day intervals until acute illnesses resolved. Households were compensated with supermarket vouchers (or book tokens for children) worth US\$65 for enrolment in the study, plus vouchers of US\$13 for each serum specimen provided and US\$6.5 for each home visit.

**Ethics.** All subjects aged  $\geq 18$  years gave written informed consent. Proxy written consent from parents or legal guardians was obtained for subjects aged  $\leq 17$  years of age, with additional written assent from those 8–17 years of age. The study protocol was approved by the Institutional Review Board of the University of Hong Kong.

**Outcome measures.** The primary outcome measure was influenza virus infection in study subjects and their household contacts indicated by a 4-fold or greater increase in antibody titer. Secondary outcome measures included (1) reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction (RT-PCR)-confirmed influenza, (2) acute respiratory illness (ARI) as determined by self-reported symptoms (at least any 2 of temperature  $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , headache, sore throat, cough, presence of phlegm, coryza, and myalgia), and (3) influenza-like illness (ILI), defined as temperature  $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$  plus cough or sore throat [19]. Acute reactions were recorded by parents for 4 days after vaccination.

**Sample size justification.** This study was designed as a pilot study for a larger trial and thus was not powered to detect indirect benefits. The sample size of 120 families was chosen to allow us to estimate attack rates in study subjects of  $\sim 20\%$  to a precision of  $\pm 7\%$ , and to confirm the logistical arrangements and the feasibility and acceptability of the study protocol.

**Randomization.** Randomization lists were prepared by a biostatistician (B.J.C.). Eligible study participants were randomly allocated to the TIV group or placebo group in the ratio 3:2 using a random number generator (R software). A block-randomization sequence was generated with randomly permuted block sizes of 5, 10, and 15. More households were allocated to the TIV group to enhance the acceptability of the study to participants.

**Blinding.** Blinding of households and study nurses was achieved by identical repackaging of the TIV and placebo into

numbered syringes by a trained nurse not involved in vaccine administration. A research assistant who had no access to the randomization list allocated unique numbers to participating households based on their order of attendance, and these were subsequently matched to vaccine packages. Allocation of TIV or placebo was concealed from participating households, study nurses, and laboratory staff and was only revealed to investigators after completion of follow-up.

**Laboratory methods.** All serum specimens were tested for antibody responses to the vaccine strains A/Brisbane/59/2007(H1N1), A/Brisbane/10/2007(H3N2), and B/Florida/4/2006-like (Yamagata-lineage) by hemagglutination inhibition (HAI) and for antibody responses to A/California/04/2009(H1N1) by viral microneutralization (VN) using standard methods. We chose to use VN tests rather than HAI tests for pandemic A/H1N1 after preliminary studies that showed that VN was more sensitive than HAI for the detection of antibody responses in pandemic A/H1N1 infections [31]. The serum samples were tested in serial doubling dilutions from an initial dilution of 1/10. Nose and throat swab samples collected during home visits were tested by RT-PCR for influenza A and B viruses [19]. Additional technical details of the laboratory procedures are given in the Appendix, which appears only in the online version of the journal.

**Statistical analysis.** Rates of adverse reaction events experienced by subjects within 4 days after administration of TIV or placebo were compared with use of Fisher's exact tests. To assess vaccine immunogenicity, pre- and post-vaccination titers and ratios of pre- to post-vaccination titers were compared using Wilcoxon signed-rank tests. The proportions of study subjects with antibody titer  $\geq 1:40$  post-vaccination were compared between the intervention group and the control group using  $\chi^2$  tests.

Post-season antibody titers were compared with mid-season titers, which were in turn compared with post-vaccination antibody titers (or baseline titers in household contacts), to determine serologic evidence of infection during the summer and winter influenza seasons, respectively. Rates of influenza infection determined by serological testing, RT-PCR, and clinical illness were compared by  $\chi^2$  tests and Fisher's exact tests, and 95% confidence intervals (CIs) were obtained using the exact

---

The figure is available in its entirety in the online edition of *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

---

**Figure 4.** Reported frequencies of mild and moderate adverse reactions for 4 days after receipt of seasonal trivalent influenza vaccine (TIV) or placebo. Mild reactions were those that were easily tolerated and did not interfere with usual activities, moderate reactions were those that interfered with usual activities, and severe reactions were those that disabled usual activities.

**Table 3. Attack Rates of Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza Infections and Acute Respiratory Illnesses in Children who Received Trivalent Inactivated Vaccine (TIV) or Placebo and their Household Contacts**

| Variable   | TIV group        | Placebo group    | P    |
|--|------------------|------------------|------|
| <b>Study subjects</b>                                |                  |                  |      |
| No. of study subjects                                | 71               | 48               |      |
| <b>Serologically confirmed infection<sup>a</sup></b> |                  |                  |      |
| Seasonal A/H1N1                                      | 0.08 (0.02–0.15) | 0.21 (0.09–0.32) | .10  |
| Seasonal A/H3N2                                      | 0.07 (0.01–0.13) | 0.12 (0.03–0.22) | .49  |
| Pandemic A/H1N1                                      | 0.32 (0.22–0.43) | 0.17 (0.06–0.27) | .09  |
| Seasonal B   | 0.03 (0.00–0.07) | 0.08 (0.01–0.16) | .36  |
| <b>RT-PCR–confirmed infection</b>                    |                  |                  |      |
| Seasonal A/H1N1                                      | 0.03 (0.00–0.07) | 0.04 (0.00–0.10) | .91  |
| Seasonal A/H3N2                                      | 0.01 (0.00–0.04) | 0.02 (0.00–0.06) | .66  |
| Pandemic A/H1N1                                      | 0.03 (0.00–0.07) | 0.00 (0.00–0.07) | .66  |
| Seasonal B   | 0.00 (0.00–0.05) | 0.02 (0.00–0.06) | .84  |
| ILI <sup>b</sup>                                     | 0.35 (0.24–0.46) | 0.38 (0.24–0.51) | .95  |
| ARI <sup>c</sup>                                     | 0.66 (0.55–0.77) | 0.67 (0.53–0.80) | .89  |
| <b>Household contacts</b>                            |                  |                  |      |
| No. of household contacts                            | 189              | 123              |      |
| <b>Serologically confirmed infection<sup>a</sup></b> |                  |                  |      |
| Seasonal A/H1N1                                      | 0.13 (0.08–0.17) | 0.14 (0.08–0.20) | .91  |
| Seasonal A/H3N2                                      | 0.21 (0.15–0.26) | 0.16 (0.10–0.23) | .41  |
| Pandemic A/H1N1                                      | 0.17 (0.12–0.23) | 0.14 (0.08–0.20) | .48  |
| Seasonal B   | 0.06 (0.02–0.09) | 0.10 (0.05–0.15) | .28  |
| <b>RT-PCR–confirmed infection</b>                    |                  |                  |      |
| Seasonal A/H1N1                                      | 0.01 (0.00–0.03) | 0.01 (0.00–0.02) | .71  |
| Seasonal A/H3N2                                      | 0.02 (0.00–0.04) | 0.01 (0.00–0.02) | .66  |
| Pandemic A/H1N1                                      | 0.03 (0.00–0.05) | 0.01 (0.00–0.02) | .47  |
| Seasonal B   | 0.00 (0.00–0.02) | 0.00 (0.00–0.03) | >.99 |
| ILI <sup>b</sup>                                     | 0.16 (0.11–0.22) | 0.11 (0.06–0.17) | .29  |
| ARI <sup>c</sup>                                     | 0.42 (0.35–0.49) | 0.39 (0.30–0.48) | .64  |

**NOTE.** Data are percentage of study subjects or household contacts (95% confidence interval), unless otherwise indicated. ARI, acute respiratory infection; ILI, influenza-like illness; RT-PCR, reverse-transcription polymerase chain reaction.

<sup>a</sup> Winter infection was confirmed by a 4-fold increase in antibody titers from after vaccination to mid-season; summer infection was confirmed by a 4-fold increase in antibody titers from mid-season to post-season. Results displayed reflect either winter or summer infection in the aggregate (see Table 5 for winter and summer results separately).

<sup>b</sup> ILI was defined as temperature  $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$  plus cough or sore throat.

<sup>c</sup> ARI was defined as at least any 2 of fever  $\geq 37.8^{\circ}\text{C}$ , chills, headache, sore throat, cough, presence of phlegm, nasal congestion, runny nose, and muscle or joint pain.

binomial method or the Wald approximation, where appropriate. In an analysis that was not specified in our study protocol (because the study was designed before the pandemic), multivariable logistic regression models were used to study risk of laboratory-confirmed pandemic influenza infection adjusting for age, sex, receipt of TIV, laboratory-confirmed seasonal influenza infection, and date of study completion. Infection with a specific influenza strain can lead to increases in antibody titers to other heterologous strains (ie, cross-reactions) [32], and we identified 15 individuals with 4-fold or greater increases in antibody titers to >1 influenza strain during either the winter or summer seasons. We adjusted for cross-reactions by classifying the most likely virus infection during a season based on RT-PCR confirmation, where available, or otherwise by assum-

ing that the infecting virus was that for which the geometric antibody titer increase was greatest.

All analyses of study outcomes were performed under the principle of intention-to-treat [33]. We used multiple imputation with 10 imputations to account for a small amount of missing data [34]. Statistical analyses were conducted in R, version 2.8.1 (R Development Core Team).

**Table 4. Rates of Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza Infections and Acute Respiratory Illnesses in Study Subjects and Household Contacts, Stratified into Winter 2008–2009 and Summer 2009 Influenza Seasons**

This table is available in its entirety in the online version of the journal.

**Table 5. Rate of Influenza-Like Illness (ILI) in Study Subjects who received Trivalent Inactivated Vaccine (TIV) or Placebo and had Serologically Confirmed Influenza**

This table is available in its entirety in the online version of the journal.

## RESULTS

Invitation letters were sent to a convenience sample of 20 primary and 5 secondary schools. In 3 schools that agreed to participate, letters were distributed to the parents of 2190 children, and 54 households were enrolled. Fifteen hundred invitations were sent to households of children who are members of a local birth cohort, and 51 households were enrolled. A further 14 households were enrolled through personal referral.

Figure 1 shows the flow of participating households throughout the study. A total of 119 households were enrolled and randomized. Subjects and household contacts in the TIV and control groups had similar baseline characteristics (Table 1). Children from 2 households did not receive the intervention and withdrew from the study: 1 child with a history of epileptic seizures was assessed by the study nurse to be contraindicated against giving blood specimens and receiving vaccination at the time of presentation, and blood specimens could not be obtained from another child. The households of 11 of 117 children who received the intervention did not complete the study. Following the principle of intention-to-treat, we included all 119 households in the primary analyses. Figure 2 shows the timeline of vaccination and serum sample collection versus local surveillance data on influenza activity during the study period [35].

A single dose of TIV led to substantial and statistically significant increases in antibody titers to the seasonal strains among study subjects (Table 2; Figure 3). Children who received TIV had statistically significant but limited geometric mean increases in antibody titers to pandemic A/H1N1 virus follow-

ing receipt of TIV, and all post-vaccination titers were below 1:40. No serious adverse reactions were observed, and pain at the injection site was the only adverse event for which there was a statistically significant difference between arms (Figure 4).

Children who received TIV had lower rates of serologically confirmed seasonal influenza infection, compared with the placebo group, although reductions were not statistically significant (Table 3). By the end of the study period, 8% and 7% of the children in the TIV group had serologically confirmed infection with seasonal influenza A/H1N1 and A/H3N2, compared with 21% and 12%, respectively, in the control group. The attack rates stratified into winter and summer seasons are reported in Table 4. Children who received TIV had a non-statistically significant higher rate of pandemic A/H1N1 infection during the summer season, compared with children who received placebo ( $P = .09$ ) (Table 3). After adjusting for potential cross-reactions, we estimated that 31% of children who received TIV were infected with pandemic A/H1N1, compared with 12% of children who received placebo ( $P = .04$ ). No differences were observed in the rates of RT-PCR-confirmed influenza, ILI, or acute respiratory illness during the study (Table 3). Among those who had serologically confirmed pandemic A/H1N1 virus infection, no difference in ILI rates was observed between study subjects who received TIV and those who received placebo (Table 5).

We did not identify any statistically significant differences in attack rates of seasonal and pandemic influenza infection or clinical influenza among the household contacts of children who received TIV or placebo, although our study had limited power to detect such differences (Table 3). Results were similar when stratified by winter and summer seasons (Table 4).

Of 91 children and their household contacts who had laboratory-confirmed (by serological testing or RT-PCR) seasonal influenza infection during the follow up period, 7 (8%; 95%

**Table 6. Factors Associated with the Risk of Laboratory-Confirmed Pandemic Influenza**

| Risk factor   | No. of study subjects | Adjusted odds ratio <sup>a</sup> (95% confidence interval) |
|---|-----------------------|--|
| Age <16 years   | 192                   | 6.60 (2.17–20.13)  |
| Age 16–45 years   | 163                   | 2.53 (0.80–7.99)   |
| Age >45 years   | 76                    | 1.00   |
| Female sex  | 229                   | 1.00   |
| Male sex  | 202                   | 0.97 (0.55–1.70)   |
| No laboratory-confirmed seasonal influenza A infection        | 277                   | 1.00   |
| Laboratory-confirmed seasonal influenza A infection           | 93                    | 0.35 (0.14–0.87)   |
| Did not receive seasonal influenza vaccine                    | 271                   | 1.00   |
| Received seasonal influenza vaccine prior to 2008–2009 season | 106                   | 1.11 (0.54–2.26)   |
| Completed study before 1 October 2009                         | 221                   | 1.00   |
| Completed study between 1 October and 20 October 2009         | 156                   | 2.77 (1.53–4.99)   |

<sup>a</sup> Adjusted for age, sex, laboratory-confirmed seasonal influenza A infection, receipt of TIV, and date of study completion.

**Table 7. Factors Associated with the Risk of Laboratory-Confirmed (by Reverse-Transcription Polymerase Chain Reaction or Serological Testing) Pandemic Influenza, with Analysis Stratified by Vaccines and Household Contact Status**

This table is available in its entirety in the online version of the journal.

CI, 3%-15%) had confirmed pandemic influenza infection by RT-PCR or serological testing. This was a significantly lower pandemic strain attack rate than that among the 276 subjects who did not have laboratory-confirmed seasonal influenza infection, of whom 56 (20%; 95% CI, 16%-26%) had laboratory-confirmed pandemic influenza infection ( $P = .01$ ). In an adjusted model, individuals who had laboratory-confirmed seasonal influenza infection had a substantially and statistically significantly lower risk of pandemic influenza infection (Table 6). Receipt of TIV did not statistically significantly affect the risk of pandemic influenza infection in the adjusted model. Adjusted estimates were similar in a sub-analysis restricted to the children who received TIV or placebo although the protective effect of seasonal influenza infection was not statistically significant, although it did remain significant in analysis of their household contacts (Table 7). In a sensitivity analysis, results were similar when an 8-fold or greater increase in antibody titer was used to define infection (data not shown). Our sample size was insufficient to allow us to distinguish whether seasonal A/H1N1 or A/H3N2 infections were associated with greater cross-protection against pandemic influenza, and both were associated with a similar nonsignificant protective effect against pandemic A/H1N1 infection (Table 8). Among individuals infected with seasonal influenza between baseline and mid-season, few had antibody titers  $\geq 1:40$  against pandemic A/H1N1 virus at mid-season, although there was some evidence of cross-reactive antibody to pandemic A/H1N1 virus following seasonal A/H1N1 infection (Figure 5).

## DISCUSSION

From January through September 2009, the predominant circulating strains of influenza in Hong Kong matched the vaccine strains in our study, except for antigenically drifted A/Perth/16/2009-like (H3N2) viruses, which circulated in the summer. Our results are consistent with the prior expectation that administration of TIV would be effective in preventing serologically confirmed seasonal influenza infection in school-age children (Table 3) [1]. Pandemic A/H1N1 was the predominant influenza strain in Hong Kong from mid-August 2009 onwards (Figure 2) [36]. During the study period, we estimated that 31% of the children who received TIV and 12% of the children who received placebo were infected with the pandemic virus ( $P = .04$ ). Furthermore, subjects who had seasonal influenza

infection during our study were found to have a significantly lower risk of subsequent infection with pandemic A/H1N1 virus (Table 4), although we could not distinguish whether greater protection was associated with seasonal A/H1N1 or A/H3N2 (Table 8).

Our results mirror those from an earlier trial conducted in the United Kingdom, which found that children who received influenza A vaccine had a lower risk of A/England infection in 1972 but later appeared to lack cross-protection against A/Port Chalmers in 1974, compared with other children who had received influenza B vaccine [37]. Similarly, in the 1957 Cleveland Family Study cohort, adults with laboratory-confirmed influenza during the period 1950–1957 had significantly lower rates of pandemic influenza A/H2N2 infection in the 1957–1958 pandemic [38]. Cross-protection against heterologous strains following infection has also been demonstrated in animal models for A/California/04/2009(H1N1) in guinea pigs [39] and other influenza viruses in pigs, chickens, mice, and cotton rats [40–45]. There are few data on the duration of cross-protective immunity following infection, although 1 study conducted in UK boarding schools found that prior influenza A/USSR(H1N1) infection in 1978 protected against infection and clinical illness from an antigenic drift variant A/England/83(H1N1) 5 years later [46, 47].

Although seasonal influenza infection does appear to confer cross-protection against pandemic H1N1, our results are consistent with those of other studies that have found little cross-reactive antibody response to pandemic A/H1N1 virus following seasonal influenza vaccination (Figure 3) [23, 48]. We found statistically significant cross-reactive antibody responses to pandemic influenza A/H1N1 following seasonal A/H1N1 infection, although few individuals had antibody titers  $\geq 1:40$  (Figure 5). The cross-protection observed in our study may be associated with mechanisms such as cell-mediated immunity [45, 49–53] or nonneutralizing antibodies via antibody dependent cell cytotoxicity [54, 55]. It is recognized that inactivated influenza vaccines are poor at inducing efficient CD8<sup>+</sup> T cell responses in humans [56]. However, natural seasonal influenza infection can elicit cross-reactive T cell responses against new virus subtypes [53], and the presence of cross-reactive cytotoxic T cells inversely relates to the amount of virus shedding in infected individuals [57]. Experimental studies in mice have suggested that, although natural infection with seasonal influenza virus

**Table 8. Factors Associated with the Risk of Laboratory-Confirmed Pandemic Influenza, with Prior Seasonal Influenza Infection Stratified into Laboratory-Confirmed Influenza A/H1N1 and A/H3N2 Infection**

This table is available in its entirety in the online version of the journal.



---

The figure is available in its entirety in the online edition of *Clinical Infectious Diseases*.

---

**Figure 5.** Antibody titers to pandemic A/H1N1 virus by viral neutralization after laboratory-confirmed seasonal influenza A infection during the winter 2008–2009 influenza season. Medians values and interquartile ranges are indicated by tick marks and vertical lines, and *P* values for comparisons between groups are displayed.

provides partial protection against the development of severe disease after challenge with a pathogenic H5N1 virus, prior vaccination with inactivated seasonal vaccine not only fails to elicit such cross-subtype protection but impairs the development of such T cell–mediated protection that arises from subsequent natural infection with seasonal influenza [58]. These findings are analogous to the observations in our study. We investigated the possibility of nonsterilizing cross-immunity by TIV against pandemic influenza, but we did not find any evidence for different ILI attack rates between study subjects who received TIV or placebo and had confirmed pandemic A/H1N1 infection (Table 6).

Our study has several limitations. First, our pilot study has a small sample size and, in particular, was underpowered to detect indirect benefits of vaccination. Second, although 40% of the participants had serologically confirmed influenza infections during our study, we only obtained RT-PCR confirmation of influenza infections in 15% because of a lack of timely identification of illnesses and possible under reporting. In other prospective cohort studies, 10%–16% of serologically confirmed infections were confirmed by RT-PCR [7,27] We had insufficient sample size to explore which seasonal strains conferred greater cross protection. In our main phase, during 2009–2010, we have increased the frequency and intensity of telephone follow-up to detect ARIs sooner, facilitate more home visits, and allow virologic confirmation of a greater proportion of infections. Finally, we may have failed to detect some seasonal influenza infections in vaccinees, because increases in antibodies associated with influenza infection might be obscured by higher post-vaccination titers, which may have decreased over time.

In conclusion, administration of TIV in children aged 6–15 years can protect against seasonal influenza infection, whereas our results show that seasonal influenza infection can confer cross-protection against pandemic A/H1N1 infection. Therefore, by protecting against strain-matched seasonal infection, administration of seasonal TIV might lead to increased vulnerability to antigenically different influenza strains [49]. Alternative vaccines, such as live attenuated vaccines [59, 60] or adjuvanted vaccines [61, 62], may confer greater cross-protec-

tion against heterologous strains and avoid this potential disadvantage of TIV.

## Acknowledgments

We thank Chan Kit Man, Lai-Ming Ho, Ho Yuk Ling, Lam Yiu Pong, Tom Lui, Tong Hok Leung, Loretta Mak, Gloria Ng, Teresa So, Jessica Wong, Eileen Yeung, and Jenny Yuen, for research support; Lincoln Lau, for assistance in drawing the figures; and Robert Booy, for helpful discussions.

**Financial support.** Area of Excellence Scheme of the Hong Kong University Grants Committee (grant no. AoE/M-12/06) and the Research Fund for the Control of Infectious Disease, Food and Health Bureau, Government of the Hong Kong SAR (grant no. PHE-2).

**Potential conflicts of interest.** B.J.C. has received research funding from MedImmune, a manufacturer of influenza vaccines. D.K.M.I. has received research funding from Roche. All other authors: no conflicts.

## References

1. Jefferson T, Rivetti A, Harnden A, Di Pietrantonj C, Demicheli V. Vaccines for preventing influenza in healthy children. *Cochrane Database Syst Rev* **2008**(2):CD004879.
2. Reichert TA, Sugaya N, Fedson DS, Glezen WP, Simonsen L, Tashiro M. The Japanese experience with vaccinating schoolchildren against influenza. *N Engl J Med* **2001**;344(12):889–896.
3. Sugaya N, Takeuchi Y. Mass vaccination of schoolchildren against influenza and its impact on the influenza-associated mortality rate among children in Japan. *Clin Infect Dis* **2005**;41(7):939–947.
4. Monto AS, Davenport FM, Napier JA, Francis T Jr. Effect of vaccination of a school-age population upon the course of an A2-Hong Kong influenza epidemic. *Bull World Health Organ* **1969**;41(3):537–542.
5. Piedra PA, Gaglani MJ, Kozinetz CA, et al. Herd immunity in adults against influenza-related illnesses with use of the trivalent-live attenuated influenza vaccine (CAIV-T) in children. *Vaccine* **2005**;23(13):1540–1548.
6. Ghendon YZ, Kaira AN, Elshina GA. The effect of mass influenza immunization in children on the morbidity of the unvaccinated elderly. *Epidemiol Infect* **2006**;134(1):71–78.
7. Loeb M, Russell ML, Moss L, et al. Effect of influenza vaccination of children on infection rates in Hutterite communities: a randomized trial. *JAMA* **2010**;303(10):943–950.
8. Rudenko LG, Slepshkin AN, Monto AS, et al. Efficacy of live attenuated and inactivated influenza vaccines in schoolchildren and their unvaccinated contacts in Novgorod, Russia. *J Infect Dis* **1993**;168(4):881–887.
9. Hurwitz ES, Haber M, Chang A, et al. Effectiveness of influenza vaccination of day care children in reducing influenza-related morbidity among household contacts. *JAMA* **2000**;284(13):1677–1682.
10. King JC, Jr., Stoddard JJ, Gaglani MJ, et al. Effectiveness of school-based influenza vaccination. *N Engl J Med* **2006**;355(24):2523–2532.
11. Basta NE, Chao DL, Halloran ME, Matrajt L, Longini IM, Jr. Strategies for pandemic and seasonal influenza vaccination of schoolchildren in the United States. *Am J Epidemiol* **2009**;170(6):679–686.
12. Longini IM Jr, Halloran ME. Strategy for distribution of influenza vaccine to high-risk groups and children. *Am J Epidemiol* **2005**;161(4):303–306.
13. Vynnycky E, Pitman R, Siddiqui R, Gay N, Edmunds WJ. Estimating the impact of childhood influenza vaccination programmes in England and Wales. *Vaccine* **2008**;26(41):5321–5330.
14. Weycker D, Edelsberg J, Halloran ME, et al. Population-wide benefits of routine vaccination of children against influenza. *Vaccine* **2005**;23(10):1284–1293.
15. Jordan R, Connock M, Albon E, et al. Universal vaccination of children against influenza: are there indirect benefits to the community? A systematic review of the evidence. *Vaccine* **2006**;24(8):1047–1062.
16. Fiore AE, Shay DK, Broder K, et al. Prevention and control of seasonal influenza with vaccines: recommendations of the Advisory

- Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP), 2009. MMWR Recomm Rep **2009**; 58(RR-8):1–52.
17. Ferguson NM, Cummings DA, Cauchemez S, et al. Strategies for containing an emerging influenza pandemic in Southeast Asia. *Nature* **2005**; 437(7056):209–214.
  18. Chao DL, Halloran ME, Obenchain VJ, Longini IM Jr. FluTE, a publicly available stochastic influenza epidemic simulation model. *PLoS Comput Biol*; 6(1):e1000656.
  19. Cowling BJ, Chan KH, Fang VJ, et al. Facemasks and hand hygiene to prevent influenza transmission in households: a cluster randomized trial. *Ann Intern Med* **2009**; 151(7):437–446.
  20. Cauchemez S, Carrat F, Viboud C, Valleron AJ, Boelle PY. A Bayesian MCMC approach to study transmission of influenza: application to household longitudinal data. *Stat Med* **2004**; 23(22):3469–3487.
  21. Khan K, Arino J, Hu W, et al. Spread of a novel influenza A (H1N1) virus via global airline transportation. *N Engl J Med* **2009**; 361(2): 212–214.
  22. Skowronski DM, De Serres G, Crowcroft NS, et al. Association between the 2008–09 seasonal influenza vaccine and pandemic H1N1 illness during Spring-Summer 2009: four observational studies from Canada. *PLoS Med*; 7(4):e1000258.
  23. Hancock K, Veguilla V, Lu X, et al. Cross-reactive antibody responses to the 2009 pandemic H1N1 influenza virus. *N Engl J Med* **2009**; 361(20):1945–1952.
  24. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Effectiveness of 2008–09 Trivalent Influenza Vaccine Against 2009 Pandemic Influenza A (H1N1). 2009 11 December 2009. <http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/mm5844a5.htm>. Accessed 10 March **2010**.
  25. Kelly H, Grant K. Interim analysis of pandemic influenza (H1N1) 2009 in Australia: surveillance trends, age of infection and effectiveness of seasonal vaccination. *Euro Surveill* **2009**; 14(31):1–5.
  26. Garcia-Garcia L, Valdespino-Gomez JL, Lazcano-Ponce E, et al. Partial protection of seasonal trivalent inactivated vaccine against novel pandemic influenza A/H1N1 2009: case-control study in Mexico City. *BMJ* **2009**; 339:b3928.
  27. Loeb M, Earn DJD, Smieja M, Webby R. Pandemic (H1N1) 2009 risk for nurses after trivalent vaccination. *Emerg Infect Dis* **2010**; 16(4):719–720.
  28. Echevarria-Zuno S, Mejia-Arangure JM, Mar-Obeso AJ, et al. Infection and death from influenza A H1N1 virus in Mexico: a retrospective analysis. *Lancet* **2009**; 374(9707):2072–2079.
  29. Hui LL, Schooling CM, Leung SS, et al. Birth weight, infant growth, and childhood body mass index: Hong Kong's children of 1997 birth cohort. *Arch Pediatr Adolesc Med* **2008**; 162(3):212–218.
  30. Chiu SS, Peiris JS, Chan KH, Wong WH, Lau YL. Immunogenicity and safety of intradermal influenza immunization at a reduced dose in healthy children. *Pediatrics* **2007**; 119(6):1076–1082.
  31. Cowling BJ, Chan KH, Fang VJ, et al. Comparative epidemiology of pandemic and seasonal influenza A in households. *N Engl J Med* **2010**; 362(23):2175–2184.
  32. Oxford JS, Haaheim LR, Slepishkin A, Werner J, Kuwert E, Schild GC. Strain specificity of serum antibody to the haemagglutinin of influenza A (H3N2) viruses in children following immunization or natural infection. *J Hyg Lond* **1981**; 86(1):17–26.
  33. Hollis S, Campbell F. What is meant by intention to treat analysis? Survey of published randomised controlled trials. *BMJ* **1999**; 319(7211): 670–674.
  34. Molenberghs G, ed. *Missing data in clinical studies*. Hoboken, NJ: Wiley, **2007**.
  35. Centre for Health Protection. Swine and Seasonal Flu Monitor 2010 11 March 2010. [http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ssfm\\_11\\_03\\_10.pdf](http://www.chp.gov.hk/files/pdf/ssfm_11_03_10.pdf). Accessed 12 March **2010**.
  36. Centre for Health Protection HKSARG. Statistics on communicable diseases. 2009. <http://www.chp.gov.hk/en/sentinel/10/26/44.html>. Accessed 15 April 2010.
  37. Hoskins TW, Davies JR, Smith AJ, Allchin A, Miller CL, Pollock TM. Influenza at Christ's Hospital: March, 1974. *Lancet* **1976**; 1(7951): 105–108.
  38. Epstein SL. Prior H1N1 influenza infection and susceptibility of Cleveland Family Study participants during the H2N2 pandemic of 1957: an experiment of nature. *J Infect Dis* **2006**; 193(1):49–53.
  39. Steel J, Staeheli P, Mubareka S, Garcia-Sastre A, Palese P, Lowen AC. Transmission of pandemic H1N1 influenza virus and impact of prior exposure to seasonal strains or interferon treatment. *J Virol* **2010**; 84(1):21–26.
  40. Imai K, Nakamura K, Mase M, Tsukamoto K, Imada T, Yamaguchi S. Partial protection against challenge with the highly pathogenic H5N1 influenza virus isolated in Japan in chickens infected with the H9N2 influenza virus. *Arch Virol* **2007**; 152(7):1395–1400.
  41. Van Reeth K, Braeckmans D, Cox E, et al. Prior infection with an H1N1 swine influenza virus partially protects pigs against a low pathogenic H5N1 avian influenza virus. *Vaccine* **2009**; 27(45):6330–6339.
  42. Van Reeth K, Gregory V, Hay A, Pensaert M. Protection against a European H1N2 swine influenza virus in pigs previously infected with H1N1 and/or H3N2 subtypes. *Vaccine* **2003**; 21:1375–1381.
  43. Kreijtz JH, Bodewes R, van den Brand JM, et al. Infection of mice with a human influenza A/H3N2 virus induces protective immunity against lethal infection with influenza A/H5N1 virus. *Vaccine* **2009**; 27(36):4983–4989.
  44. Straight TM, Ottolini MG, Prince GA, Eichelberger MC. Evidence of a cross-protective immune response to influenza A in the cotton rat model. *Vaccine* **2006**; 24:6264–6271.
  45. Grebe KM, Yewdell JW, Bennink JR. Heterosubtypic immunity to influenza A virus: where do we stand? *Microbes Infect* **2008**; 10(9): 1024–1029.
  46. Davies JR, Grilli EA, Smith AJ. Infection with influenza A H1N1. 2. The effect of past experience on natural challenge. *J Hyg Lond* **1986**; 96(2):345–352.
  47. Davies JR, Grilli EA, Smith AJ. Influenza A: infection and reinfection. *J Hyg Lond* **1984**; 92(1):125–127.
  48. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Serum cross-reactive antibody response to a novel influenza A (H1N1) virus after vaccination with seasonal influenza vaccine. *MMWR Morb Mortal Wkly Rep* **2010**; 58(19):521–524.
  49. Bodewes R, Kreijtz JH, Rimmelzwaan GF. Yearly influenza vaccinations: a double-edged sword? *Lancet Infect Dis* **2009**; 9(12):784–788.
  50. Liang S, Mozdzanowska K, Palladino G, Gerhard W. Heterosubtypic immunity to influenza type A virus in mice: effector mechanisms and their longevity. *J Immunol* **1994**; 152(4):1653–1661.
  51. Nguyen HH, Moldoveanu Z, Novak MJ, et al. Heterosubtypic immunity to lethal influenza A virus infection is associated with virus-specific CD8(+) cytotoxic T lymphocyte responses induced in mucosa-associated tissues. *Virology* **1999**; 254(1):50–60.
  52. Jameson J, Cruz J, Terajima M, Ennis FA. Human CD8+ and CD4+ T lymphocyte memory to influenza A viruses of swine and avian species. *J Immunol* **1999**; 162(12):7578–7583.
  53. Kreijtz JH, de Mutsert G, van Baalen CA, Fouchier RA, Osterhaus AD, Rimmelzwaan GF. Cross-recognition of avian H5N1 influenza virus by human cytotoxic T-lymphocyte populations directed to human influenza A virus. *J Virol* **2008**; 82(11):5161–5166.
  54. Hashimoto G, Wright PF, Karzon DT. Antibody-dependent cell-mediated cytotoxicity against influenza virus-infected cells. *J Infect Dis* **1983**; 148(5):785–794.
  55. Vella S, Rocchi G, Resta S, Marcelli M, De Felici A. Antibody reactive in antibody-dependent cell-mediated cytotoxicity following influenza virus vaccination. *J Med Virol* **1980**; 6(3):203–211.
  56. He XS, Holmes TH, Zhang C, et al. Cellular immune responses in children and adults receiving inactivated or live attenuated influenza vaccines. *J Virol* **2006**; 80(23):11756–11766.
  57. McMichael AJ, Gotch FM, Noble GR, Beare PA. Cytotoxic T-cell immunity to influenza. *N Engl J Med* **1983**; 309(1):13–17.
  58. Bodewes R, Kreijtz JH, Hillaire M, et al. Vaccination with whole inactivated virus vaccine affects the induction of heterosubtypic im-

- munity against influenza A/H5N1 and immunodominance of virus specific CD8+ T cell responses in mice. *J Gen Virol* **2010**;91:1743–1753.
59. Suguitan AL Jr, McAuliffe J, Mills KL, et al. Live, attenuated influenza A H5N1 candidate vaccines provide broad cross-protection in mice and ferrets. *PLoS Med* **2006**;3(9):e360.
60. Chen GL, Subbarao K. Vaccines for pandemic influenza. *Current topics in microbiology and immunology*. Berlin, Germany: Springer, **2009**.
61. Leroux-Roels I, Bernhard R, Gerard P, Drame M, Hanon E, Leroux-Roels G. Broad clade 2 cross-reactive immunity induced by an adjuvanted clade 1 rH5N1 pandemic influenza vaccine. *PLoS ONE* **2008**;3(2):e1665.
62. Leroux-Roels I, Borkowski A, Vanwolleghem T, et al. Antigen sparing and cross-reactive immunity with an adjuvanted rH5N1 prototype pandemic influenza vaccine: a randomised controlled trial. *Lancet* **2007**;370(9587):580–589.