

<b>Polysaccharide Pneumococcal Vaccine Supply</b>	<b>David McKeown</b> <b>Medical Officer of Health</b>
---	--

May 18, 2004

This is an update regarding the polysaccharide pneumococcal vaccine supply. The world-wide shortage of the Pneumo 23 (Aventis Pasteur) vaccine remains in effect.

**Pneumovax 23**

The Ontario Government Pharmaceutical and Medical Supply Service (OGPMSS) has received a supply of the Pneumovax 23 vaccine from Merck Frosst, which is now available for distribution. The Pneumovax 23 vaccine will be provided in a multi dose vial format, which contains five, 0.5ml doses per vial. The multi-dose vial is a one-time delivery from Merck Frosst for the summer, and the vaccine supply will return to the single dose format for the upcoming influenza season.

**Who Is Eligible**

Publicly-funded polysaccharide pneumococcal vaccine is provided for the following indications:

- ♦ Immunization of persons, 2 years of age and older, with high risk medical conditions (as defined by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization)

- ♦ Immunization of all persons 65 years of age and older
- ♦ Re-immunization of specific high risk persons as recommended by the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI)

**Vaccine Cold Chain Requirements**

The 5 dose Pneumovax 23 vial, once punctured is stable until the expiry date, as long as it is maintained in the appropriate cold chain conditions (+2C to +8C). The product monograph is available on the Merck Frosst website, under “Product Information” at:  
[www.merckfrosst.ca/e/products/home.html](http://www.merckfrosst.ca/e/products/home.html)

**Ordering**

To order the 5 dose Pneumovax 23 vial, either fax your order to **(905)793-2114** or call Health Line Peel at **(905)799-7700**. Please keep in mind to request your 5 dose Pneumovax 23 orders by vials during this special offer.