



Tackling Chicken Pox vaccine Shortage *By: Shaffina Jaafar & Michelle Tan HP*

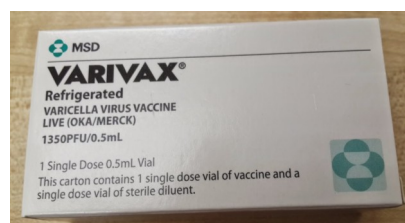
Varicella zoster virus (VZV) causes two distinct clinical diseases. Varicella, more commonly called chicken pox is the primary infection which is normally benign and characterized by generalized exanthematous rash. Recurrence of the infection results in the more localized phenomenon known as herpes zoster, often known as shingles. Live attenuated varicella vaccine was licensed in the United States in 1995. It has been found to be highly effective against severe varicella (95%-100%) and less effective against mild disease (70%-90% in most studies). Most vaccinees who acquire varicella tend to have mild illness with fewer than 50 lesions compared to 250-500 lesions in unvaccinated persons. Immunity appears long-lasting. In one study, breakthrough of the disease in 10 years after one single dose was 7.3%. Most of it occurred in the first 5 years. In contrast, only 2.2% of children who received two doses had varicella. Hence the two-dose regimen is now recommended.

WHO should be vaccinated?

- A) all children at 12 through 15 months of age with a second dose usually at 4 through 6 years*
- B) For susceptible persons aged 13 years or older who live in high risk areas for transmission (schools, child care, prisons, military, colleges)*
- C) Non pregnant women of childbearing age*
- D) Those who lives in household with children*
- E) International travellers*

Unfortunately, the Drug Control Authority (DCA) approved chicken pox vaccines in Malaysia -**VARILRIX**®, is facing a worldwide shortage. It has been out of stock for at least one and a half years now. The shortage can be traced back to GSK's production plant in Wavre, Belgium. GSK has stopped worldwide deliveries of the vaccines manufactured at the facility after discovering quality problems with some batches.

Due to the unmet needs, Merck (MSD) was asked to help to bring in **VARIVAX**® to provide supply. As the product have not been registered and approved for use in Malaysia, hence it needs to be brought in under special import permit under the Pharmacy Legislation. As a temporary measure, Bahagian Perkhidmatan Farmasi KKM has given MSD a special permit that allows importation of **VARIVAX**® to supply only to private hospitals and clinics.



MSD is currently doing the necessary to get **VARIVAX**® approved for use in Malaysia. It hopes to get it approved by next year so that it will be readily available for purchase without having to go through the Import Permit hassle.

As for now, if there are any patients who needs the chicken pox vaccine urgently, you may write a prescription for your patient and refer them to call up the nearest Private hospital to check for stock levels.

Principles and Practice of Infectious Disease, Mandell, Douglas and Bennett's.

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/vis/vis-statements/varicella.pdf>

<http://www.vaccineinformation.org/chickenpox/>

<http://www.fiercepharmamanufacturing.com/story/gsk-blames-chickenpox-vax-shortage-plant-problems/2014-01-28>



DRUG SHORTAGE UPDATES:

1) **Polytar Liquid** (pine tar, cade oil, coal tar solution and arachis oil extract of coal tar.) -GSK has discontinued the item.

2) **Duofilm** (Salicylic acid BP 16.7%, Lactic acid BP 16.7%) - GSK is experiencing shortage.

3) **Hydroquinone Cream 4%**
- Hoe Pharmaceuticals has discontinued the item

For alternatives please call
Drug Info Centre ext 5415/5401

WHICH PHARMACY DO I CALL?

MAIN Out-Patient (OPD)	-Supply of medications for Medical, Orthopedic, Surgery Clinics, all Day Cares (except O&G Day Care)	5424 /8241
Panggil dan Ambil (OPD)	-'Call-before-you-Collect' Service	03-9145 6990
Farmasi Non-Formulary (Kedai Farmasi)	-For checking of price and availability of Non Formulary Item, supply of MAC items	5398/5399
Paediatric, O&G, Nephrology	-Supply of medications from Pediatric, O&G, Nephrology & SLE Clinics, O&G Day Care, repeat medications from Medical 3	5423/5428
1st Floor Pharmacy	-Supply of medications from Ophthalmology, ENT, Endoscopy, <i>Klinik Warga</i> , Maxillofacial , Psychiatry and Oncology Clinics	7430
Emergency Pharmacy	-Discharge medications from all wards (1 month supply only. *For Repeat medications from all wards, take from MAIN Out Patient Pharmacy —except Medical 3) -Emergency Department prescriptions -In-patient supply of medications after 10pm	7703/7971
In-Patient (IPD)	-Inpatient drug supply to ward (until 10 pm)	5814/5717
Floor Stock	-To supply Floor Stock Items	5806
Dangerous Drugs (DDA)	-Supply of dangerous drugs (DD) and psychotropics	5420
Manufacturing	-External extemporaneous preparations	5811
Sterile Unit Total Parenteral Nutrition	-Sterile preparations (eye drops) /Nutrition for Pediatrics and Surgical patients	6701
Cytotoxic Drug Reconstitution	-Cytotoxic Preparations	6702
Drug Information Centre	-For drug related enquiries including policies, administration, availability, interaction, side effects, choice etc -Product Complaints, Adverse Drug Reaction -To request forms & procedures for new drug submission or budget increase for drugs in the Formulary .	5415/5401

DRUGS WHICH HAS REACHED MAXIMUM PRESCRIBING LIMITS

	Name of Drug	Prescribers	Max Prescribing Limits	Usage till June 2014 (RM)
1	Liraglutide Inj (Victoza)	Endocrinologists	35 patients	35 patients
2	Raltegravir 400mg Tab (Isentress)	ID Specialists	5 patients	5 patients
3	Capecitabine 500mg Tab (Xeloda)	Oncologists	RM60,000/10 patients	RM87,898/12 patients
4	Nilotinib 200mg Cap (Tasigna)	Hematologists	10 patients	10 patients
5	Infliximab 1mg Inj (Remicade)	Rheumatologists	4 patients	4 patients
6	Pregabalin 75mg, 150mg tab (Lyrica)	Pain Management Specialists, Ortho, Rheumato & Palliative Care	150,000.00	273,581.00
7	Pramipexole /Pramipexole SR Tab (Sifrol XR)	Neuromedical	90 patients	90 patients
8	Rotigotine Transdermal Patch (Neupro)	Neuromedical	20 patients	20 patients
9	Ciclesonide Nasal Spray, Nasonex Nasal Spray & Avamys NS	ENT	450,000.00	453,318.11
10	Desloratadine Tab (Aeries)	ENT	150,000.00	158,968.26

New patients will need to buy these drugs from 'Kedai Farmasi' . (commencing 1st September 2014).
Existing patients will still be able to obtain their medications from the Outpatient Pharmacy as usual