

# SLMA Guidelines and Information on Vaccines Seventh Edition 2020

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SLMA Guidelines and Information on Vaccines provides concise clinical guidance for healthcare professionals, about the safest and most effective use of vaccines in their practice. It was first launched in 2001, co-edited by Dr. Lucian Jayasuriya and Professor Anura Weerasinghe. The latest 7<sup>th</sup> edition, co-edited and authored by a group of experts, is dedicated to late Professor Anura Weerasinghe for his contribution as an editor for over 16 years. Notably, from the first edition to the latest 7<sup>th</sup> edition, Dr. Jayasuriya had been a co-editor; his commitment to publish the revised and updated editions during the last two decades must be truly appreciated.

The guideline contains information for all EPI and non-EPI vaccines available in Sri Lanka. It is user-friendly, easy to navigate, yet replete with up-to-date information. Also, it gives additional information on vaccination in special circumstances. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition contains five new chapters: the impact of immunisation, immunisation in pregnancy, immunisation of competitive sports person, immunisation in disasters, epidemics and outbreaks and immunisation of the immunocompromised.

The chapter on immunisation of competitive sports persons is remarkable. Although a minor illness such as diarrhoea or an upper respiratory infection is not a major illness for a healthy young adult, it could be very critical for an athlete to miss or fail the most important competition in his life. Apart from the usual vaccines, when travelling to endemic areas, the athletes should be immune against specific diseases. Therefore, it is obvious that the general guidelines on vaccination cannot be directly transferred to sports persons, and the vaccinations should be scheduled so that possible side effects are least likely to occur in periods of competition.

Immunisation during pregnancy is detailed in Chapter

24. Immunisation has become part and parcel of antenatal care. However, some confusion among healthcare professionals and patients exists about the safety and timing of immunisation. The healthcare provider's recommendation is the most important factor that influences the pregnant women to get the required vaccination done. Thus, it is important that we should be aware of the current best evidence and communicate those to pregnant women.

Natural disasters and outbreaks have become more frequent worldwide, and they may adversely affect the short and long-term well being of children and adults. Evidence had revealed that exposure to a natural disaster increases the likelihood of acute illnesses such as diarrhoea, fever, and acute respiratory illness, particularly in children under 5 years. The 7<sup>th</sup> edition of SLMA Guidelines and Information on Vaccines provides current recommendations for managing such emergencies to lessen the harm.

Dengue is a significant and increasing threat to public health in Southeast Asia. Specific antiviral medications are not available for dengue, and prevention using vector control has limited success. Thus, all medical professionals, particularly in these high-risk regions, should be aware of the vaccine status, which may be the most important element to control dengue disease in the future.

All in all, this book provides valuable guidance based on the best scientific evidence available. It targets paediatricians, family practitioners, internists, obstetricians, adult physicians, residents, medical students, nurses, and many others. It is a one-stop source for everything one needs to know about vaccines. Untiring efforts of the editors, reviewers, and contributors to put the scientifically rigorous information on vaccine together are a great accomplishment.

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