

Atkinson script for April 8 NetConference

We receive many questions about Twinrix, most of which concern the schedule. I would like to comment briefly on one Twinrix schedule issue.

Twinrix is a combination vaccine that contains an adult dose of hepatitis B vaccine and a pediatric dose of hepatitis A vaccine. It was approved for use among adults 18 years of age and older for a THREE dose schedule at zero, one and 6 months. There are several issues that arise frequently that are not addressed in the manufacturer's package insert, namely the minimum intervals between doses, and schedules that contain both Twinrix and single antigen products.

After licensure of Twinrix in 2001, the National Immunization Program conferred with the hepatitis experts in the CDC Division of Viral Hepatitis, or DVH, concerning these schedule issues not addressed by the manufacturer. Based on these discussions we decided to recommend minimum intervals similar to those for hepatitis B vaccine - at least 1 month between doses 1 and 2, and at least 2 months between doses 2 and 3. While not shown on this graphic, we also recommended that the interval from the first to last dose be at least 6 months, since that is the minimum interval for the first to the last doses of the hepatitis A component.

This information was subsequently included in the seventh and eighth editions of the Pink Book, published in 2002, 2003, and 2004. Those of you who have the 8th edition will find this information on pages 184 in the hepatitis A chapter, and page 210 in the hepatitis B chapter.

In 2002, these recommendations were also available on a Twinrix web page on the DVH website. Recommendations for schedules including both Twinrix and single antigen products were also included in the seventh edition of the book, and on the DVH website.

In 2003, DVH changed their recommendations for both a minimum interval, and schedules including both Twinrix and single antigen vaccines.

The minimum intervals between doses 1 and 2, and doses 1 and 3 are unchanged. They are one month and six months, respectively, as shown on this graphic. What has changed is the minimum interval between doses 2 and 3. Previously, this minimum

interval was 2 months. The new minimum interval for doses 2 and 3 recommended by DVH is FIVE months. This was published in the hepatitis Vaccines For Children resolution adopted on October 16, 2003. The resolution is available on the ACIP website.

The Twinrix web page on the DVH website that contained the earlier- and now incorrect- information has been removed. Unfortunately, this change was not included in the 2004 edition of the Pink Book. Those of you who have a copy of the eighth edition of the book should make a note of this, and correct your copy.

We receive many questions about schedules that include both Twinrix and single antigen vaccines. We do not have time on today's program to discuss this issue, but will include it in a NetConference later this year. I will say that the information on this subject in the SEVENTH edition of the Pink Book is no longer valid. This issue is not addressed in the eighth edition.

One additional comment: many of you are aware that the childhood immunization schedule published in January 2004 only included only January through June. The schedule for the second half of 2004 - July through December - is expected to be published in 3 weeks, on April 30. This schedule will include the recommendation for routine influenza vaccination of ALL children 6 through 23 months of age. Also, the 2004 influenza ACIP statement is expected to be published in MMWR in early May. We will include a discussion of new influenza vaccination recommendations in our next NetConference. Andrew?