

## **Information about the swine flu vaccine Pandemrix**

You have today (\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_) received the pandemic-specific vaccine Pandemrix, which has been developed to give protection against swine flu.

Pandemrix contains antigen as its active substance and the adjuvant AS03, an agent that enhances the immune response to the vaccine. Exactly the same adjuvant is used in the H5N1 avian influenza vaccine, which has been approved by the European Medicines Agency (EMA). The vaccine also contains thiomersal, which acts as a preservative. Thiomersal contains a form of mercury that does not accumulate in the body but is rapidly metabolised and removed from the body.

The vaccine does not contain live viruses, but parts of an inactivated virus. None of the ingredients in the vaccine can cause flu.

### **Possible side-effects**

The side-effects caused by Pandemrix are generally similar to those related to seasonal influenza vaccines. The frequency of possible side-effects is expected to be higher. The enhancing substance AS03 works very well, but as it boosts the body's immune response it may also cause irritation at the injection site.

The most common side-effects following vaccination are redness, warmth, swelling or tenderness where the injection was given. They usually appear within 1–2 days of vaccination and are quite normal and expected. Some people may also experience swollen glands.

More than 10 per cent of those vaccinated may also experience symptoms such as a slight rise in temperature, fever, irritability, nausea or headache. These treatable side-effects, although inconvenient, usually disappear within 1–2 days. Pandemrix is not expected to cause any life-threatening or long-term side-effects.

Any general symptoms, such as aches and fever, can be treated with normal, over-the-counter pain relievers.

Following vaccination, if you notice any side-effects not listed here, please contact the healthcare provider that administered the vaccine, your local health centre or your occupational health care unit.