Health professionals at YFVC: Risk Assessment reminder

A reminder of the importance of risk assessment when considering yellow fever vaccination

The Report of the Commission on Human Medicine's Expert Working Group on benefit-risk and risk minimisation measures of the yellow fever vaccine (2019) was published on 21 November 2019.

Serious adverse events following YF vaccination are rare and fall into three main categories: hypersensitivity reactions, vaccine-associated neurologic disease (YEL-AND) and vaccine-associated viscerotropic disease (YEL-AVD). YF vaccine is **contraindicated** in some, including for persons with underlying medical conditions where the immune system is compromised, and those with a history of thymectomy for any reason. You can read more about YF vaccine, serious adverse events and information on contraindications to vaccination on the Yellow Fever Zone.

The 2019 report followed two fatal adverse reactions to YF vaccine that occurred in the UK during 2018 and resulted in additional recommendations to reduce the risk of adverse reactions to YF vaccine including:

- improving communication between the health professional and YF vaccine recipient (e.g., by providing the patient with an authorized patient information leaflet -PIL)
- standardising risk assessment (e.g., by the use of a YF risk assessment checklist to be used during the travel health consultation).
- Mandatory training for all health professionals administering YF vaccine.

NaTHNaC have included these recommendations in our Conditions of Designation for YFVC.

Health professionals at YFVC are reminded of the importance of taking a detailed medical history as part of risk assessment in the travel health consultation. The travel health consultation should be a two-way conversation between the health provider and traveller; information gathered should be carefully documented, interpreted, and mutually understood. If you have any concerns about a traveller's suitability for YF vaccine, please contact our Advice Line for health professionals.

YFVC are, under the Conditions of Designation and Code of Practice, required to report

suspected and confirmed serious adverse events following yellow fever vaccination to the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA), the vaccine manufacturer and NaTHNaC. Where a serious YF vaccine associated adverse event is suspected or occurs, UKHSA Guidance for reporting and management should be followed by health professionals.

Please share this communication with your clinical team.

Resources

- UKHSA Immunisation against infectious disease (The Green Book)
- Yellow fever factsheet
- World Health Organization