



## Emerging and Reemerging Infectious Diseases, Region of the Americas

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### WHO Recommendations for the Flu Vaccine

#### *Appendix to the Flu Virus Vaccine Composition Recommended for the 2003–2004 Season*

This past 28 February 2003, WHO published its recommendations on the composition of influenza virus vaccine for the 2003–2004 season in the northern hemisphere (November 2003–April 2004). Due to an insufficiency of data, the decision was made to postpone recommendations on Component A (H3N2). Since then, additional data has confirmed that, in haemagglutinin inhibitor (IHA) tests of the most recent isolates, an ever-growing proportion differs from A/Panama/2007/99 and resembles A/Fujian/411/2002. However, since no A/Fujian/411/2002-like isolates exist in chicken embryos to use as a candidate for the vaccine, besides the many isolates that are antigenically close to A/Panama/2007/99, it is recommended that the Component A (H3N2) used in the 2003–2004 vaccines contain an A/Moscow/10/99 (H3N2)-like virus.

In summary, the vaccines used for the 2003–2004 season (winter in the northern hemisphere) contain the following:

- One virus A/New Caledonia/20/99 (H1N1)-like.
- One A/Moscow/10/99 (H3N2)-like\*.
- One B/Hong Kong/330/2001-like\*\*.

\* The vaccine strain most widely used is A/Panama/2007/99.

\*\* The vaccine strains currently used include B/Shandong/7/97, B/Hong Kong/330/2001, and B/Hong Kong/1434/2002.

*Source:* World Health Organization (WHO) (2003) [Recommended Composition of Influenza Virus Vaccines for Use in the 2003–2004 Influenza Season](#). *Weekly Epidemiological Record / Relevé épidémiologique hebdomadaire* (WER/REH) 78 (9): 58–64.

For the 2004 flu season in the southern hemisphere (from May to October), it is recommended that the vaccines used contain the following:

- One A/New Caledonia/20/99(H1N1)-like virus.
- One A/Fujian/411/2002(H3N2)-like\*.
- One B/Hong Kong/330/2001-like\*\*

\* A/Kumamoto/102/2002 and A/Wyoming/3/2003 are A/Fujian/411/2002-like viruses cultivated in eggs.

\*\* The viruses currently being used in vaccines are B/Shandong/7/97, B/Hong Kong/330/2001, and B/Hong Kong/1434/2002. The B/Brisbane/32/2002 virus is also available as a vaccine virus.

Source: World Health Organization (WHO) (2003) [\*Recommendations for Influenza Vaccine Composition\*](#).