

## It's flu season – Sanofi Pasteur intensifies its fight to prevent influenza!

- Farhan Akhtar debuts as 'cause ambassador' for flu prevention -

**Mumbai, July 15 '15:** Sanofi Pasteur, the vaccines division of Sanofi, today announced an initiative to educate parents in India about the seriousness of influenza (also known as flu) and preventing it amongst young children. Considering the grave impact of the disease across India in the beginning of 2015, renowned actor, director, singer, and **father – Farhan Akhtar** – has chosen to spread awareness about flu prevention. Farhan's messages will reach people via mass media and in-clinic as well.

**Speaking about the initiative, Jean-Pierre Baylet, Country Head - Sanofi Pasteur India,** said, *"Influenza is a serious and contagious disease that often gets mistaken for common cold. As seen during the early part of the year, influenza outbreaks can cause significant morbidity and mortality and strain the health care system. According to the WHO, the principal way of reducing Influenza burden is by vaccination. However lack of awareness is a limiting factor in vaccine usage. Sanofi Pasteur, India is therefore embarking on an initiative to educate the masses and improve awareness on Influenza and its prevention. We are delighted that Farhan Akhtar is supporting the cause of flu prevention to ignite attitudinal change towards influenza and its prevention."*

**Regarding his decision to support the cause, Farhan Akhtar said,** *"I was shocked to see the impact that flu has had across India in the last few months. As a parent, I was concerned for my children's welfare and hence, consulted their pediatrician. It was surprising to learn that flu is **not** a common cold, but a serious viral infection that carries a high risk especially amongst children below the age of 5. It was reassuring to know that flu can be prevented and children can be protected against flu through timely vaccination. This was a revelation to me, and I am sure that there are others too who have misconceptions about the disease, inadvertently risking their children's lives. Hence, in my capacity as a public figure, I decided to support the initiative to spread the message on flu prevention."*

Seasonal influenza – a contagious respiratory illness, caused by viruses, has emerged as a serious public health issue with the potential to affect people in any age group, peaking during monsoons and winter, sometimes assuming epidemic proportions. Children less than 5 years; immune-compromised individuals - particularly those with HIV, AIDS or cancer; pregnant women; elderly people and asthmatics are at high risk of catching the disease.

**Adds Dr. Nitin Shah, Consultant Pediatrician – PD Hinduja National Hospital, Mumbai, and Executive Director – Influenza Foundation of India,** *"Immunization against flu has not been given much attention in India as people have a very casual approach to it. Only in the face of an epidemic such as swine flu, immunization is considered as an option. This is unsafe behavior and puts others at risk. Influenza, both seasonal and year round is a serious infection of the respiratory tract and can cause severe health problems, in some cases leading to death. Vaccination is a safe prevention tool and is highly recommended for everyone especially children under the age of 5."*

### NOTE TO PARENTS:

- Flu is **NOT** common cold<sup>1</sup>
- Flu cases are **'MORE'** common during monsoon<sup>2</sup>
- Young children<sup>3</sup> are at **HIGH** risk of flu<sup>4</sup>
- **DON'T** ignore Flu!
- Ask your doctor about **kids friendly flu shot**

According to the World Health Organization (WHO), vaccination against influenza is currently the principal means of reducing or counteracting influenza mortality and reducing the morbidity burden in the country. The World Health Organization (WHO) has declared seasonal influenza a serious public health problem. Each year, influenza affects 5-15% of the global population but the rates can reach 40% – 50% in high risk groups. In India, millions are increasingly exposed to influenza and its life threatening health complications. During the recent outbreak in the beginning of 2015, the virus affected approximately 33,000 people, killing nearly 2000 plus people.

Since 2011, under its corporate initiative, 'I for Immunisation', Sanofi Pasteur India has conducted various awareness drives, such as launching a Facebook page called 'Mothers against flu'; multiple contests to generate ideas for increasing immunization awareness and rural awareness programs in Gujarat and urban schools across the country wherein parents, students, and teachers have been educated about the importance and ways of prevention against diseases such as flu. Both Sanofi Pasteur India and Farhan Akhtar aim to create a behavioral shift from 'ignorance to awareness to conviction' about the seriousness of influenza and its prevention.

### About Sanofi

Sanofi, a global healthcare leader, discovers, develops and distributes therapeutic solutions focused on patients' needs. Sanofi has core strengths in diabetes solutions, human vaccines, innovative drugs, consumer healthcare, emerging markets, animal health and Genzyme. Sanofi is listed in Paris (EURONEXT: SAN) and in New York (NYSE: SNY).

Sanofi Pasteur, the vaccines division of Sanofi, provides more than one billion doses of vaccine each year, making it possible to immunize more than 500 million people across the globe. A world leader in the vaccine industry, Sanofi Pasteur offers the broadest range of vaccines protecting against 20 infectious diseases. The company's heritage, to create vaccines that protect life, dates back more than a century. Sanofi Pasteur is the largest company entirely dedicated to vaccines. Every day, the company invests more than EUR 1 million in research and development. For more information, please visit: [www.sanofipasteur.com](http://www.sanofipasteur.com)

Present in India since 1996, Sanofi Pasteur India Private Limited markets broad range of vaccines against infectious diseases.

### References/ Notes:

1. Questions & Answers. Cold Versus Flu. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [updated 2011 Feb 8; cited 2015 Feb 9]. Available from: <http://www.cdc.gov/flu/about/qa/coldflu.htm>
2. MS, Broor S, Gunasekaran P, et al. Multisite virological influenza surveillance in India: 2004-2008. *Influenza Other Respi Viruses*. 2012 May;6(3):196-203.
3. Children less than 5 years
4. Vaccines against influenza WHO position paper - November 2012. *Wkly Epidemiol Rc*. 2012 Nov 23; 87(47):461-76.

### Forward Looking Statements

*This press release contains forward-looking statements as defined in the Private Securities Litigation Reform Act of 1995, as amended. Forward-looking statements are statements that are not historical facts. These statements include projections and estimates and their underlying assumptions, statements regarding plans, objectives, intentions and expectations with respect to future financial results, events, operations, services, product development and potential, and statements regarding future performance. Forward-looking statements are generally identified by the words "expects", "anticipates", "believes", "intends", "estimates", "plans" and similar expressions. Although Sanofi's management believes that the expectations reflected in such forward-looking statements are reasonable, investors*

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**EXPERTS' VIEW**

**Dr. Arun Wadhwa,  
Senior Pediatric  
Consultant, South Delhi**

*"It is very important for everyone and especially for higher risk groups such as children and senior citizens to get the annual flu shot. Vaccination protects not only against severe flu but also related complications such as pneumonia that can even lead to death. However, in India this is not common knowledge and so flu danger is taken lightly. Only in times of epidemic, people take action. This is an unsafe practice and we need to change this mindset."*

**Dr. Pramod Jogh,  
Senior Consultant  
Pediatrician, Prof. of  
Pediatrics at D.Y. Patil  
medical college, Pune**

*"Quite often in my practice I have seen that people ask for a flu vaccination only in times of an epidemic. Influenza is present all-round the year in India and can strike at any time, although there are two peak seasons: during monsoon and in winter. Annual vaccination is recommended to keep the virus in check throughout the year. Influenza occurs globally with an annual attack rate estimated at 5%–10% in adults and 20%–30% in children. According to a recent published data in India, it contributes to around 5-10% of all acute respiratory infections (ARI). The reported incidence of influenza URI was found to be 10/100 child years. Influenza is responsible for significant morbidity and mortality in children. Attack rates of influenza during annual epidemics are consistently highest in children. As per Centre for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), 90% of pediatric deaths occurred in unvaccinated children in past years. Costs of influenza in children include direct medical care costs and indirect costs due to productivity losses."*

**Dr. Bhaskar Shenoy,  
Consultant Pediatrician  
and chief, division of  
pediatric infectious  
diseases, Manipal  
Hospital, Bengaluru**

*"It is very disheartening to see that in India anti-flu vaccination is only adopted as a contingency measure during outbreaks and not as a necessary preventive measure. High risk populations especially children in India must be routinely and regularly vaccinated against influenza because the disease can lead to some serious life threatening complications. The flu vaccine is clinically proven to be a safe and effective prevention tool and should be taken annually."*

**Dr. Pallab Chatterjee,  
Consultant Pediatrician  
with special interest in  
Pediatric Pulmonology,  
Apollo Gleneagles  
Hospital, Kolkata**

*"Viral flu has killed more people worldwide than both World Wars combined. Seasonal flu, including Swine flu, is now prevalent in India round the year, peaking during the change of seasons. It can be a serious illness in all age-groups, more so at the extremes of age (elderly and below 5 years). Vaccination is known to be the safest and the most effective preventive tool. Unfortunately, in India, people only decide to get themselves and their families vaccinated only during an epidemic scare. This results in an increase in the number of hospitalizations and deaths. Proactive efforts must be taken to change this trend."*

**Dr. Sudarshan Reddy,**  
**Chief Consultant**  
**Pediatrician, Krishna**  
**Children's Hospital**  
**Hyderabad and Pharma**  
**Superintendent, Institute**  
**of Child Health, Nilofer**  
**Hospital, Hyderabad**

*"In India, awareness on protecting themselves and their families from flu is extremely low amongst most people. There is a certain amount of indifference combined with some ignorance. Most people do not differentiate between flu and common cold. This leads to a rise in complications resulting in more cases of hospitalization and even death. Vaccination is the most effective preventive measure clinically proven to be beneficial to everyone, especially high risk groups such as young children, elderly and pregnant women."*

**Dr. S Balasubramaniam,**  
**Head of the Dept of**  
**Pediatrics & IAP IDC PID**  
**Fellowship Coordinator,**  
**Kanchi Kamakoti CHILDS**  
**Trust Hospital**

*"It is very important for everyone and especially for higher risk groups to get the annual flu shot. Vaccination provides good degree of protection against flu which can lead to complications such as pneumonia and many others that can even lead to death. However, in most countries including India, only in epidemic situations, awareness of flu and flu shots is obvious. This is an unsafe practice and we need to change this mindset."*

**Dr. Neeraj Kumar,**  
**Head, Dept of Pediatrics,**  
**Chaitanya Hospital,**  
**Chandigarh**

*"While Influenza can strike anyone, young children are at a greater risk of infection and the ability of overcoming it since their immunity is lower. This puts them at a higher risk of hospitalization and can even lead to death. Therefore, annual flu vaccination is recommended for everyone but most importantly for children under 5. Unfortunately in India, immunization is considered only when there is an epidemic such as 'swine flu'. This mindset needs to change."*

**Dr. Raju Shah,**  
**Former professor and**  
**HOD Pediatric and**  
**Consulting Pediatrician,**  
**Ahmedabad**

*"Parents must ensure that they vaccinate their kids every year diligently to avoid severe flu related complications. While many people are susceptible to contracting influenza, certain high risk groups such as young children are more prone to it as their immunity is low, thereby compromising and complicating their recovery process. Annual flu vaccine is therefore highly recommended in keeping your families safe and secure. Vaccination has been clinically proven to protect against the circulating influenza strains in a given year."*

**Dr. Sanjay Niranjana,**  
**President, Indian**  
**Academy of Pediatrics,**  
**Lucknow Branch**

*"There has been a marked rise in the number of influenza cases this year from January to March, and July to September last year in Lucknow. High risk groups such as children are infected more often, due to their low immunity. Health complications from the flu can be serious and even life-threatening. An annual flu vaccine is the best way to reduce the chances of getting seasonal flu and spreading it to others. Parents should consult their doctors before administering the flu shot."*