WHO Programmatic Guidance Note

Use of more than one rotavirus vaccine product to complete the vaccination series

The World Health Organization (WHO) recommends that the rotavirus vaccination series for each child be completed with the same product whenever feasible. However, if the product used for a prior dose is unavailable or unknown, the series should be completed with any available licensed product. Restarting the vaccine series is not recommended. If any dose in the series was from a product that has a 3-dose schedule, or if the vaccine product is unknown for any dose, a total of 3 doses of rotavirus vaccine should be administered for a complete vaccination series.

If a country is switching from one vaccine product to another, the primary emphasis during the transition period should be to complete the vaccination series with the same rotavirus vaccine product for each individual child. When this is not feasible due to programmatic difficulties, children who have an incomplete series of the first product should complete the series with the second product, per the guidelines above.

The effectiveness of a complete series that contains more than one product is likely to be greater than an incomplete series with one product. Data from the United States indicate that a 3-dose series that contained both Rotarix and Rotateq is as immunogenic and effective as a complete series of either product alone.\(^1\), \(^2\), \(^3\), \(^4\) Further, the theoretical risk for adverse events is not expected to be higher among infants that complete the series with more than one product, as compared with infants that complete the series with the same product. At this time, no data are available on interchangeability of other licensed rotavirus vaccines.

Finally, for countries which may distribute more than one product or switching products, it is recommended that the vaccination record of each child indicates the vaccine product used for each of the individual doses.

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