



## NEWS RELEASE

### For Immediate Release

#### **New Prevenar 13 vaccine for Broader Protection Against Pneumococcal Disease**

*Vaccine now protects against 13 strains of bacteria responsible for infections that may lead to brain damage, lung infections and deafness*

**Kuala Lumpur, 20 October 2010** – Malaysian children can look forward to protection against pneumococcal disease (PD) with the new Prevenar 13 vaccine, a successor of the earlier Prevenar which extends protection to six additional serotypes of the bacterium *Streptococcus pneumoniae* that causes infections in the brain, blood, lungs and middle ear<sup>1</sup>.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) estimates that more than 735,000 people die of pneumococcal disease annually and that about half of these deaths are in children under five years of age.<sup>2</sup> **Pneumonia alone, which is also caused by *Streptococcus pneumoniae*, causes nearly 1 in 5 deaths of children under five worldwide — more than 2 million children each year — and kills more children than AIDS, malaria and measles combined.<sup>3</sup> This disease can affect both children and adults. Individuals who carry the bacteria in their nasal passages may potentially expose others to the risk of PD through close contact via respiratory droplets that are sneezed, coughed, or exhaled. However not all individuals who are exposed to the bacteria will become ill.<sup>4</sup>**

Prevenar 7 was first introduced in 2005 in to help protect infants and young children against PD. Prevenar 13 is designed to help further reduce the risk of PD in infants and young children by providing a broader serotype coverage against PD. Prevenar 13 includes the seven serotypes in Prevenar 7 (4, 6B, 9V, 14, 18C, 19F, and 23F) – plus six additional serotypes (1, 3, 5, 6A, 7F, and 19A).<sup>5</sup> The 13 serotypes represent prevalent invasive disease-causing strains in young children worldwide.<sup>6</sup> Infants and children who have begun immunization with Prevenar may switch to Prevenar 13 at any point in their dosing schedule and complete the immunization series according to official recommendations.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Pneumococcal Disease. Queensland Health, [http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/BacterialInfections/pneumococcalDisease\\_fs.asp](http://access.health.qld.gov.au/hid/InfectionsandParasites/BacterialInfections/pneumococcalDisease_fs.asp), last accessed 23 August 2010.

<sup>2</sup> Estimated Hib and pneumococcal deaths for children under 5 years of age. Immunization Surveillance Assessment and Monitoring, World Health Organization. [http://www.who.int/immunization\\_monitoring/burden/Pneumo\\_hib\\_estimates/en/index.html](http://www.who.int/immunization_monitoring/burden/Pneumo_hib_estimates/en/index.html) Last accessed 13 October 2010.

<sup>3</sup> UNICEF. Pneumonia: The Forgotten Killer of Children, [http://www.unicef.org/publications/index\\_35626.html](http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_35626.html), last accessed 24 August 2010

<sup>4</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Pneumococcal Disease. *CDC Pink Book*. 2008;15:217-230

<sup>5</sup> Wyeth Data. Prevenar 13 Summary of Clinical Safety (ISS)

<sup>6</sup> Pneumococcal Global Serotype Project. Summary report of stage1/version 1 analysis. Available at: [http://www.preventpneumo.org/pdf/GSP%20Summary%20for%20SAGE%20Nov6-8%202007\\_Oct%2019-07.pdf](http://www.preventpneumo.org/pdf/GSP%20Summary%20for%20SAGE%20Nov6-8%202007_Oct%2019-07.pdf). Accessed January 20, 2009

<sup>7</sup> Prevenar 13\* Summary of Product Characteristics (August 11, 2009 version).

“Pneumococcal disease is a vaccine-preventable illness with a readily available preventive solution,” said Datuk Dr Zulkifli Ismail, Consultant Paediatrician. “*S. pneumonia* can lead to serious infections like meningitis and pneumonia with little warning, as fevers and body aches, which are common childhood symptoms, can easily be mistaken for milder conditions. Parents now have the option to avoid the risk of PD and secure a good future for their children by investing in a vaccine for added assurance that their children are protected against the most common serotypes that cause pneumococcal disease.”

Data presented at the 5<sup>th</sup> Asian Congress of Pediatric Infectious Diseases (ACPID) showed that the most commonly encountered serotypes of *Streptococcus pneumoniae* were 19F, 6B, 19A, 14, 1, 6A, 23F, 18C, 3 and 5. Of these, 19F, 19A and 6B were the three most antibiotic-resistant strains. With all these serotypes represented in Prevenar 13, the vaccine’s coverage is estimated at 78% for children between one and 5 years of age.<sup>8</sup>

Dr Zukifli also added that when a child is diagnosed with PD, it can be devastating for the whole family as well as very challenging. “PD can create a lot of problems for all family members as caring for the patient can be emotionally, mentally as well as financially draining.,” added Dr. Zulkifli.

Despite the gravity of this illness, there remains a lack of awareness about pneumococcal disease and its potential dangers. According to the 2006 Global Pneumococcal Disease Awareness Survey in Malaysia, familiarity with the disease is generally low. Only 31% of Malaysian parents are aware of pneumococcal disease, and only 38% are familiar with the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine.<sup>9</sup>

“Pneumococcal disease is a serious health issue<sup>10</sup> and Prevenar 13 is poised to help protect current and future generations from the potentially devastating consequences of this disease,” said Angel Choi, Country Manager for Pfizer (Biopharmaceutical Business) Malaysia and Brunei.

“As parents, we wish the best for our children and it is sad to know that children continue to be infected with PD which can be easily prevented with vaccination. Greater awareness of the disease and investing in vaccination can bring great peace of mind to parents, knowing that their children can now be protected against pneumococcal disease. Pfizer is exceptionally proud that after 10 years of safe and effective protection with Prevenar 7, Malaysia and other countries around the world are now making the transition to Prevenar 13 for optimum protection.”

In combination, Prevenar and Prevenar 13 are being used in national immunization programmes in many countries worldwide, from Australia<sup>11</sup> and Britain<sup>12</sup> to Ireland<sup>13</sup> and the United States<sup>14</sup>, with Singapore<sup>15</sup> being the most recent country to do so.

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<sup>8</sup> Poster Presentation at 5<sup>th</sup> Asian Congress of Pediatric Infectious Diseases, 22-26 September 2010.

<sup>9</sup> The Star Online, Reducing childhood risk, <http://thestar.com.my/health/story.asp?file=/2008/6/15/health/21537293&sec=health>, last accessed 24 August 2010

<sup>10</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. Invasive pneumococcal disease in children 5 years after conjugate vaccine introduction-eight states, 1998-2005. *MMWR*. 2008;57:144-148.

<sup>11</sup> National Immunisation Program Schedule. <http://www.health.gov.au/internet/immunise/publishing.nsf/content/nips2>, last accessed 13 October 2010

<sup>12</sup> British National Vaccination Schedule. <http://www.fitfortravel.scot.nhs.uk/advice/advice-for-travellers/british-vaccination-schedule.aspx>, last accessed 13 October 2010

<sup>13</sup> Ireland Health Service Executive (HSE) National Immunisation Office <http://www.immunisation.ie/en/ChildhoodImmunisation/VaccinePreventableDiseases/PneumococcalDisease/>, last accessed 13 October 2010

<sup>14</sup> 2010 Child & Adolescent Immunization Schedules, Centers for Disease Control. <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/child-schedule.htm#parents>, last accessed 13 October 2010

<sup>15</sup> Vaccination Guide for Children in Singapore, [http://childrenimmunisation.com.sg/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=29](http://childrenimmunisation.com.sg/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=16&Itemid=29), last accessed 13 October 2010

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We also collaborate closely with public and private health care providers, and communities to support and expand access to reliable, affordable health care in Malaysia. Pfizer Malaysia began operations in 1964, and every day, some 500 colleagues throughout the country work to advance wellness and make a difference for all who rely on us.

Wyeth is now a wholly owned subsidiary of Pfizer Inc. The merger of Wyeth Malaysia and Pfizer Malaysia entities may be pending in various jurisdictions and integration is subject to completion of various local legal and regulatory obligations.

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Issued on behalf of Pfizer (M) Sdn Bhd by:

Irene Yong/Audrey Teoh/Bonnie Liew

Telephone (+603) 2283 2730, Fax (+603) 2283 2750

E-mail: [irene.yong@fleishman.com](mailto:irene.yong@fleishman.com) / [audrey.teoh@fleishman.com](mailto:audrey.teoh@fleishman.com) / [bonnie.liew@fleishman.com](mailto:bonnie.liew@fleishman.com)