Varilrix
(Live attenuated varicella-zoster [Oka strain] virus)

Administration Guide

The Varilrix SPC should be reviewed to ensure that the vaccine is administered to the appropriate patient.

Varilrix requires reconstitution of the diluent in the pre-filled syringe with the powder contained in the vial.

The vaccine MUST NOT be:

- Injected intravascularly
- Injected intradermally
- Given orally
- Mixed with other medicinal products in the same syringe

1 Take the Varilrix box from the fridge and remove vaccine from packaging.

2 Inspect the diluent for any foreign particulate matter and/or variation of physical appearance prior to administration and discard if any are observed.

3 Attach the new needle to the syringe by unscrewing the cap anticlockwise and twisting the needle clockwise into the syringe, then remove the needle protector.

4 Reconstitute the vaccine by adding the entire contents of the diluent syringe to the vial containing the powder then shake the vial until the pellet is completely dissolved in the diluent. After reconstitution the vaccine should be used promptly.

5 Ensure that the patient is sitting with the vaccination area completely exposed and infants/children are held securely on their parent’s lap.

- Administer the vaccine by subcutaneous injection into the anterolateral area of the thigh.
- Where two or more different vaccines are being given in one visit, these should ideally be given into different limbs.

6 Discard empty syringe, needle and safety cap in approved biological waste or sharps disposal containers according to local regulations, and check to see if the patient requires a follow up appointment to complete the 2 dose course.

As with other childhood vaccinations some children can experience adverse events such as soreness at the site of injection, fever and rash. Communicating effectively with parents regarding how to handle potential side effects can alleviate concerns.
Prescribing Information:
See Summary of Product Characteristics before prescribing

Varilrix® varicella-zoster vaccine.

Composition: Live attenuated varicella-zoster virus (Oka strain, \(10^{3.3}\) PFUs) as powder and solvent for reconstitution.

Uses: Active immunisation against varicella of healthy subjects from 9 months of age.

Dosage and Administration: Two doses of 0.5mls with interval of at least 6 weeks (≥3 months in children aged 9–12 months). For subcutaneous use only, preferably into the deltoid region or anterolateral region of thigh. Use different injection site if administering another live vaccine concomitantly.

Side Effects: See SPC for full details. Common and very common: Injection site reaction including pain, redness, swelling, rash, fever. Serious: Encephalitis, cerebrovascular accident, cerebellitis, convulsions, cerebellar ataxia, thrombocytopenia, anaphylaxis, Henoch Schonlein Purpura, Kawasaki syndrome.

Contraindications: Hypersensitivity to neomycin, or any excipients, or to any varicella vaccine; pregnancy and breast-feeding; immunodeficiency states with total lymphocyte count under 1200/mm³, immunocompromised subjects with evidence of lack of cellular immune competence, or severe humoral or cellular (primary or acquired) immunodeficiency. Acute, severe febrile illness.

Precautions: Avoid pregnancy for one month after vaccination. Vaccinees (especially if rash develops) may transmit vaccine viral strain to contacts. Consider risk:benefit for some immunocompromised patients. Delay vaccination of those receiving immunoglobulins or blood transfusion for at least 3 months. Risk of Reye’s syndrome with co-administration of aspirin or systemic salicylates to children under 16. If not administered concomitantly, leave an interval of at least 1 month before or after a measles containing vaccine.

Legal Category: POM
NHS Cost: £27.31
MA Holder: SmithKline Beecham Ltd, 980 Great West Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 9GS, UK.

Further information is available from: Customer Contact Centre, GlaxoSmithKline, Stockley Park West, Uxbridge, Middlesex UB11 1BT; customercontactuk@gsk.com, Freephone 0800 221 441
Date of preparation: September 2017
UK/VAR/0004/17

Adverse events should be reported.
Reporting forms and information can be found at www.mhra.gov.uk/yellowcard or search for MHRA yellow card in the Google Play or Apple App store. Adverse events should also be reported to GlaxoSmithKline 0800 221 441.