

## INFORMATION PAPER

Military Vaccine Agency  
23 July 2008

SUBJECT: Aircrew Flying Restrictions After Immunizations

1. Purpose. To describe the Services' policies on aircrew flying restrictions after immunizations.

2. Facts.

a. The current Joint Service immunization and chemoprophylaxis policy (reference 4a) requires that aviation personnel be grounded for 12 hours after immunization(s), or as specified by their flight surgeon due to possible side effects (local and systemic) that may occur after immunizations. Aircrew flight surgeons may also exempt personnel who have previously experienced urticaria, hypersensitivity phenomena, or other unusual phenomena after an immunization from flying duties for an appropriate interval (for example, 72 hours). Access to medical care on the ground is recommended for a period of 4 hours for all personnel, unless operational needs dictate otherwise.

b. If significant side effects develop, further temporary grounding may be necessary until the side effects resolve.

c. In addition to the Joint Service policy requirements, Service medical departments have developed their own policy or additional guidance.

3. Service-specific aircrew medical restrictions after immunization policies or guidance are as follows:

a. Per Army Regulation 40-8 (reference 4b), the U.S. Army requires that aviators be restricted from flying duty for a minimum period of 12 hours following any immunization. If any type of reaction occurs, local or systemic, the aviator remains restricted from flying duties until cleared by a flight surgeon or an aeromedical physician assistant.

d. Air Force Medical Policy (reference 4c) states the following: "Adverse reactions are rare. Access to medical care on the ground is recommended for a period of 4 hours for all personnel, unless operational needs dictate otherwise." Except for aircrew immunized against Japanese-encephalitis vaccine (JEV), reference 4c states: "Due to its higher incidence of local and systemic side effects and delayed allergic reactions, grounding is required: 3 days after first dose, 5 days after second dose, and 3 days after third dose. Grounding reduction for critical missions may be granted by the Major Command per the AF JEV policy letter."

e. In accordance with OPNAVINST 3710.7T (reference 4d), aircrew in the U.S. Naval Service are grounded for 12 hours after all immunizations except JEV, live-attenuated influenza virus (FluMist), and smallpox. Navy internal guidance for flight surgeons

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(reference 4e) recommends that all aircrew be grounded 24 hours after immunization against JEV, 72 hours after immunization with FluMist, and 24 hours after vaccination against smallpox. These same recommendations apply to the U.S. Marine Corps aircrew per references 4d and 4e.

a. The U.S. Coast Guard requires that aviation personnel who receive immunizations be grounded for 12 hours following immunization(s). Further temporary grounding may be necessary until significant side effects are resolved (reference 4f).

b. NATO Allies follow STANAG 3474 (reference 4g), which recommends that a period of initial suspension be instituted in accordance with national policy.

#### 4. References.

a. Army Regulation 40-562, BUMEDINST 6230.15A, AFJI 48-110, CG COMDTINST M6230.4F, Immunizations and Chemoprophylaxis, 29 September 2007.

b. Department of the Army. Army Regulation 40-8, Temporary Flying Restrictions Due to Exogenous Factors Affecting Aircrew Efficiency, 16 May 2007.

c. Department of the Air Force Memorandum. Official Air Force Approved Aircrew Medications List. For most current version, log on to the: Air Force Medical Service Knowledge Exchange. <https://kx.afms.mil>

d. Department of the Navy. OPNAVINST 3710.7T, NATOPS General Flight and Operating Instructions, 1 March 2004.

e. Personal communication. Information provided by CAPT Christopher R. Armstrong, MC, USN, Director, Aerospace Medicine, Department of the Navy, 27 November 2007.

f. Department of Homeland Security. Coast Guard Aviation Manual, COMDTINST M6410.3, 28 May 2003.

g. North Atlantic Treaty Organization. STANAG 3474 AMD (EDITION 4) Temporary Flying Restrictions Due To Exogenous Factors Affecting Aircrew Efficiency, 18 October 1996.

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