LOOK-ALIKE SAFETY ALERT REGARDING FLUARIX® AND TWINRIX®

I. ISSUE
FLUARIX® is an influenza virus vaccine used for prophylaxis manufactured by Glaxo Smith Kline (Figure 1). TWINRIX® is a hepatitis A inactivated and hepatitis B recombinant vaccine used for prophylaxis that is also manufactured by Glaxo Smith Kline (Figure 2). Both products utilize the Tip-Lok technology, which consists of single-dose, pre-filled, pre-labeled syringes. The plastic and cellophane packagings used on these two products are identical. One difference between their appearance lies in that Twinrix® has a blue band at the bottom of the syringe, while Fluarix® does not.

II. VA MEDSAFE RECOMMENDATIONS
1. Staff must be informed of potential look-alike confusion between FLUARIX® and TWINRIX®.
2. Pharmacy must store FLUARIX® and TWINRIX® in separate areas in the pharmacy.
3. Pharmacy must create a warning system for staff to notify of potential look-alike confusion between FLUARIX® and TWINRIX® (i.e., computer alerts during the ordering/verifying process and/or warning stickers on packaging).
4. Drug/syringe used must be verified with the name of the drug on the prescription.

III. SOURCE
VISN 8 Safety Alert Report.

Figure 1. FLUARIX®
Figure 2. TWINRIX®