

Vaccine Information for Parents

Vaccines, like any medication can have side effects. This leaflet will explain what common reactions can be anticipated after receiving a vaccine and what to do if you are concerned.

Common reactions

Most vaccines can cause mild reactions; these will have been explained to you by your immunisation provider. Side effects after vaccination are usually mild and short-lasting, and do not need special treatment (see over page). If the reaction seems severe or persists and you are concerned, contact your doctor or immunisation provider.

Rare reactions

As with any medication, very rarely an individual may experience a severe allergic reaction such as anaphylaxis. Your immunisation provider is trained to recognize and manage any immediate, severe reactions. A severe, anaphylactic reaction will generally occur within the first 15 minutes after receiving a vaccine.

It is important for you to wait for 15 minutes after receiving a vaccine so you may be observed for any reactions.

What to do if side effects occur

If side effects occur, here are some suggestions to help. However, if side effects seem persistent, see your doctor, immunisation provider or contact *healthdirect*.

Paracetamol

The routine use of paracetamol at the time of immunisation is no longer recommended as today's vaccines have fewer side effects. Paracetamol may be needed if there is pain after vaccination – carefully follow the instructions on the pack/bottle. Do not use aspirin.

Pain

- Give paracetamol (not aspirin) if needed.
 - Soreness at the injection site can be eased by placing a wet cloth over the site.
- Note: Children may protect the limb in which an injection was given for up to 48 hours.*

Vomiting and diarrhoea

- See your doctor if severe or persists.

Irritability, decreased appetite, sleepiness

- These are common and do not require treatment. Extra comforting may be needed. These symptoms usually disappear after 24 to 48 hours – if they don't, see your doctor.

Seizure (convulsion, fit)

Usually lasts 20 seconds, rarely more than 2 minutes.

- Always see a doctor after your child has a seizure (convulsion or fit).
- Call an ambulance immediately or take your child to hospital.

Fever

If your child is hot:

- Take their temperature regularly (a fever is above 38°C).
- Give extra fluids (e.g. more breast feeds, water).
- Dress your child lightly.
- Do not bathe in cool water (which can cause shivering, increasing the temperature).

All vaccines used in Australia have been extensively tested for safety

Before a vaccine or any medication can be used in Australia it must be licensed by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA).

The TGA extensively assess each vaccine for safety and effectiveness, this assessment is based on scientific evidence (clinical trials).

Information about immunisation and reactions can be confusing, if you would like further information go to 'Immunisation Myths and Realities, 4th Edition' at www.immunise.health.gov.au or the National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance (NCIRS) www.ncirs.usyd.edu.au

If you are worried

call *healthdirect* on 1800 022 222

It's a free, 24 hour service



Government of **Western Australia**
Department of **Health**

Ticked boxes indicate vaccines given today ____/____/____

Most vaccines can cause the following common reactions:

Common reactions	Management of common reactions
Any injection can cause soreness, redness, itching, swelling or burning at the injection site for 1–2 days.	Paracetamol may be given to ease injection site discomfort, a cool cloth placed onto the injection site may also help.
A fever (temperature) can occur after receiving any vaccine.	Paracetamol may also be given as per instructions on the bottle/packet for fever (temperature).
A small hard lump may appear where the injection was given and can persist for some weeks or months.	No treatment needed.
Fainting may occur but this is seen mainly in adolescents and adults.	Anyone who complains of 'giddiness' or 'light-headedness' before or after vaccination should be advised to lie down until free of symptoms.

Further reactions specific to each vaccine are listed below:

<p>Diphtheria/tetanus/pertussis containing vaccines</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Infanrix Hexa <input type="checkbox"/> Quadracel <input type="checkbox"/> Adacel <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<p>Hepatitis A vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> VAQTA <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Rash Site Given: LA RA LL RL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Irritable, crying, unsettled and generally unhappy • Drowsiness or tiredness • Febrile seizure Site Given: LA RA LL RL	<p>Varicella vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Varilrix <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<p>Oral Rotavirus vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> RotaTeq <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Temperature (fever, can be above 39°C) <p><i>The following reactions may occur 5–26 days after vaccination</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pustular rash (2–5 lesions) usually at injection site, may also appear on other parts of the body <p><i>If those vaccinated develop a rash, they should cover the rash and avoid contact with people who have impaired immunity for the duration of the rash</i></p> Site Given: LA RA LL RL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fever (temperature) • Vomiting and diarrhoea can occur up to 7 days following vaccination 	<p>Human Papilloma Virus vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Gardasil <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<p>Pneumococcal conjugated vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Prevenar <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Mild headache • Mild nausea Site Given: LA RA LL RL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above Site Given: LA RA LL RL	<p>Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Pneumovax 23 <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<p>Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Hiberix <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Muscle pain Site Given: LA RA LL RL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above Site Given: LA RA LL RL	<p>Hepatitis B vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> HB Vax II <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Dizziness, sweating, muscle pain, insomnia and earache Site Given: LA RA LL RL
<p>Measles-mumps-rubella vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Priorix <input type="checkbox"/> MMRV <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above <p><i>The following reactions may occur 5–12 days after vaccination:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Temperature (fever, can be 39.4°C) lasting 2–3 days, faint red rash (not infectious), runny nose, cough and/or puffy eyes • Drowsiness or tiredness • Swelling of salivary glands • Pain and stiffness in the joints (older children/adults) • Thrombocytopenia (low platelet count) about 1 in 30,000 • Encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) about 1 in 3 million • MMRV – a varicella form rash may occur. (See Varicella vaccine) Site Given: LA RA LL RL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Drowsiness or tiredness • Muscle aches • Guillian-Barre Syndrome (ascending paralysis) about 1 in a million (adults) Site Given: LA RA LL RL
<p>Meningococcal C conjugate vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Neisvac C <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____	<p>Influenza vaccine</p> <input type="checkbox"/> Fluvax <input type="checkbox"/> Vaxigrip <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above • Irritable, crying, unsettled and generally unhappy • Loss of appetite • Headache (older children/adults) Site Given: LA RA LL RL	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above <p>Site Given: LA RA LL RL</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Inactivated poliomyelitis vaccine (IPV) and IPV containing vaccines</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Common reactions as listed above <p><i>Reference: the Australian Immunisation Handbook 9th edition NHMRC 2008</i></p>