Following vaccination

what to expect and what to do

Australian Government
Department of Health, Disability and Ageing

National Immunisation Program
A joint Australian, State and Territory Government Initiative

All vaccinations may cause the following reactions:



Mild fever that doesn't last long <38.5°C



Where the needle was given: Sore, red, burning, itching or swelling for 1–2 days and/or small, hard lump for a few weeks



Grizzly, unsettled, unhappy or sleepy



Teenagers/adults fainting and muscle aches

SEE BACK PAGE FOR ADDITIONAL COMMON REACTIONS SPECIFIC TO EACH VACCINE

What to do at home:



If a baby/child is hot don't have too many clothes or blankets on



Breastfeed more frequently and/or give extra fluids



Put a cold wet cloth on the injection site if it is sore



For fever or pain give paracetamol. Follow instructions on the packaging

When to seek medical advice:

See your health professional, or go to the hospital if:



Pain and fever are not relieved by paracetamol (e.g. Panadol®)



The reactions are bad, not going away or getting worse or if you are worried at all



Any of the rare reactions below are experienced

How to report an adverse reaction:

Significant side effects that occur after vaccination (adverse events) should be reported to your health professional. You can also report them to the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA) at **www.tga.gov.au** or your state or territory health department.



Rare reactions requiring immediate medical attention

As with any medication, on rare occasions an individual may experience a severe reaction.

Seek medical attention immediately if you experience any of the symptoms below and inform the health professional of your recent vaccination.

Anaphylaxis

- A severe allergic reaction which occurs suddenly, usually within 15 minutes, however anaphylaxis can occur within hours of a vaccine being administered. Early signs of anaphylaxis include redness and/or itching of the skin, swelling (hives), breathing difficulties, persistent cough, hoarse voice and a sense of distress.

Intussusception (relates to rotavirus vaccine)

- This is an uncommon form of bowel obstruction where one segment of the bowel slides into the next, much like the pieces of a telescope.
- There is a very small risk of this occurring in a baby in the first week after receiving the first dose of rotavirus vaccine, and a smaller risk after the second vaccine dose.
- The baby cries more than usual, looks pale, gets very irritable and pulls legs up to the abdomen because of pain.

Seizure

- Some young children (especially aged 1–3 years) are more prone to seizures when experiencing a high fever caused by an infection or after a vaccine. The seizure usually lasts approximately 20 seconds and very rarely more than 2 minutes.

Where can I get more information?

Contact your health professional

Visit **health.gov.au/immunisation**

Contact your state or territory health service

Practice contact details:

Vaccines given on ____ / ____ / 20____ Time given: _____ (Please wait a minimum of 15 minutes after immunisation)

Indicate injection sites by circling appropriate box: **LA** = Left Arm, **RA** = Right Arm, **LL** = Left Leg, **RL** = Right Leg

Hepatitis B vaccine
(Engerix® B Paediatric)

- See 'Common reactions'

LL | RL | LA | RA

Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), hepatitis B, polio, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b vaccine
(Infanrix® hexa or Vaxelis®)

- See 'Common reactions'

LL | RL | LA | RA

Pneumococcal vaccine
Children and adolescents (Prevenar 20®)
Adult (Capvaxive®)

- See 'Common reactions'

LL | RL | LA | RA

Meningococcal ACWY vaccine
Children (Nimenrix®)
Adolescents (MenQuadfi®)

- See 'Common reactions'

LL | RL | LA | RA

Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine
(ActHIB®)

- See 'Common reactions'

LL | RL | LA | RA

Influenza vaccine

- See 'Common reactions'

LA | RA | LL | RL

Rotavirus vaccine
(Rotarix®)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Vaccine virus can come out in poo, particularly after the first dose. Handwashing is important after every nappy change.
- Intussusception **– see 'rare reactions'**

BY MOUTH

Measles, mumps, rubella vaccine
(Priorix®)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Reactions that may be present 7 to 10 days after vaccination:
  - fever over 39°C
  - rash (not infectious)
  - head cold, runny nose, cough, puffy eyes
  - swelling in the neck /under the chin.

LL | RL | LA | RA

Meningococcal B vaccine
(Bexsero®)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Fever (>38.5°C) is common in young children receiving this vaccine. Paracetamol will reduce the likelihood of fever. For children less than 2 years of age, a dose of paracetamol is recommended 30 minutes before vaccination or as soon as possible afterwards. Followed by two more doses 6 hours apart even if there is no fever.

LL | RL | LA | RA

Measles, Mumps, rubella, varicella (chickenpox) vaccine
(Priorix-Tetra®)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Reactions that may be present 7 to 10 days after vaccination:
  - fever over 39°C
  - rash (not infectious)
  - head cold, runny nose, cough, puffy eyes
  - swelling in the neck/under the chin.
- Reactions 5–26 days after vaccination:
  - mild chickenpox like rash (may be infectious, seek medical advice).

LL | RL | LA | RA

Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine
Children (Infanrix® or Tripacel®)
Adults and adolescents (Boostrix® or Adacel®)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Very rarely, large injection site reactions (>50 mm) including limb swelling may occur (with the 4th or 5th dose of a tetanus-containing vaccine in children). These reactions usually start within 24–72 hours after vaccination, and resolve spontaneously within 3–5 days. If this reaction extends beyond one or both joints, seek medical advice.

LL | RL | LA | RA

Hepatitis A vaccine
(Vaqta® Paediatric)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Rash

LL | RL | LA | RA

Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) polio vaccine
(Infanrix® IPV or Quadracel®)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Large injection site reaction of redness and swelling from the shoulder to the elbow. If this reaction extends beyond one or both joints, seek medical advice.

LA | RA

Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine
(Gardasil®9)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Mild headache
- Mild nausea

LA | RA

Shingles vaccine
(Shingrix®)

- See 'Common reactions'
- Reactions that may be present 1 to 3 days after vaccination:
  - tiredness
  - headache
  - fever
  - muscle aches
  - gastrointestinal symptoms.

LA | RA

Respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) vaccine
Pregnant women (Abrysvo®)
Adults (Arexvy®)

- See 'Common reactions'

LA | RA | LL | RL

COVID-19 vaccine
(Comirnaty®)

- See 'Common reactions'
  - headache
  - fatigue

LA | RA

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