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: