

Having a vaccination what to expect

Immunisation is a simple and effective way of protecting children and adults against certain diseases. It not only protects individuals, but also others in our community by increasing the level of immunity and minimising the spread of disease. Immunisation uses the body's natural defence mechanism - the immune response - to build resistance to infectious diseases. Immunisation helps people stay healthy by preventing serious infections. Although many diseases are not as common as they were in the past, it is still vitally important for children and adults to be vaccinated to help ensure we do not experience serious disease outbreaks.

Where can I be immunised?

You can be immunised at your local doctor or medical centre. Check with your local council, community child health and community health centre regarding free immunisation clinics.

Pre-vaccination checklist

Please tell your doctor/nurse if the person about to be vaccinated:

- is unwell today
- has a disease which lowers immunity (eg. leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS) or is having treatment which lowers immunity (eg. oral steroid medicines such as cortisone and prednisone, radiotherapy, chemotherapy)
- has had a severe reaction following any vaccine
- has any severe allergies (to anything)
- has had any vaccine in the past month
- has had an injection of immunoglobulin, or received any blood products or a whole blood transfusion within the past year
- is pregnant
- has a past history of Guillain-Barré syndrome
- was a preterm infant
- has a chronic illness
- has a bleeding disorder.

A different vaccine schedule may be recommended if the person to be vaccinated:

- identifies as an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander
- does not have a functioning spleen
- is planning a pregnancy or anticipating parenthood
- is a parent, grandparent or carer of a newborn
- lives with someone who has a disease which lowers immunity (eg. leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS), or lives with someone who is having treatment which lowers immunity (eg. oral steroid medicines such as cortisone and prednisone, radiotherapy, chemotherapy).

Care after vaccination

- For redness or swelling at the injection site, apply a cold compress.
- To lower temperature or relieve discomfort, give paracetamol.
- If fever persists, consult your doctor.
- If any reaction occurs that you consider serious or unexpected, seek medical advice.
- Contact the service provider if you or your child has a reaction following vaccination.

Possible side effects of the vaccine

Like all medications, vaccines may have side effects. Most side effects are minor, last a short time and do not lead to any long-term problems. There may be some swelling, redness and soreness where the injection was given and fever. Contact your immunisation provider if you or your child has a reaction following vaccination which you consider serious or unexpected.

Other resources

[Queensland Health Immunisation](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/immunisation/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/public-health/topics/immunisation/default.asp>)

For further information, please contact:

- your doctor
- your nearest [public health unit](https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp) (<https://www.health.qld.gov.au/system-governance/contact-us/contact/public-health-units/default.asp>)
- [13 HEALTH](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/13health/default.asp) (<http://www.health.qld.gov.au/13health/default.asp>) (call 13 43 25 84)
- [Immunise, Australian Government](https://beta.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation) (<https://beta.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation>) (call 1800 671 811).