



# After Vaccination Information



*Vaccines, like any other medication or natural therapy, can have side effects. This leaflet explains the reactions that may occur after receiving a vaccine and what to do if they occur.*

## Common reactions

Most vaccines can cause mild reactions; these are usually short lasting and do not require special treatment (see over page). If the reaction seems severe or persists and/or you are concerned, seek further advice from your GP or immunisation provider as soon as possible or go directly to a hospital. Alternatively you can call the Immunisation Section at SA Health on 1300 232 272 during business hours. For advice outside of these hours, please visit [healthdirect.gov.au](http://healthdirect.gov.au)

## Rare reactions

On very rare occasions a severe allergic reaction such as anaphylaxis may occur, requiring immediate medical treatment. Your immunisation provider is trained to recognise and manage any immediate severe reactions. If a severe allergic reaction is going to occur, it will generally be within the first 15 minutes of 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, and for treatment to be provided if needed.**  
**You should not drive or operate machinery for at least 15 minutes after vaccination.**

## How to report a reaction

Reporting a reaction following immunisation is an essential part of ensuring ongoing vaccine safety monitoring.

All serious or unexpected reactions should be reported either by completing an online Vaccine Reaction Report Form at [sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation) or by contacting the Immunisation Section on 1300 232 272 during business hours. Alternatively you can report the reaction to your immunisation provider.

## All vaccines used in Australia have been extensively tested for safety

Before any vaccine can be used in Australia it must be licensed by the Therapeutic Goods Administration (TGA). The TGA uses scientific evidence on each vaccine to assess safety and effectiveness.

## Further information

SA Health – Vaccine Safety: [sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation)

Australian Government Department of Health: [health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation](http://health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation)

National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance: [ncirs.edu.au](http://ncirs.edu.au)

**Ticked boxes  indicate vaccines given today \_\_\_ / \_\_\_ / \_\_\_**

**Most vaccines can cause the following common reactions:**

Common reactions to all vaccines	Management of common reactions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Any injection can cause soreness, redness, itching, swelling or burning at the injection site for 1-2 days</li> <li>A fever (temperature)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paracetamol may be given as per instructions on the bottle/packet, a cool cloth placed onto the injection site may also help.</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A small hard lump may appear where the injection was given and persist for some weeks or months</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Paracetamol may also be given as per instructions on the bottle/packet for fever (temperature)</li> <li>Give extra fluids and do not overdress infants if hot</li> <li>No treatment needed</li> </ul>

**Further common reactions specific to each vaccine are listed below:**

<input type="checkbox"/> <b>COVID-19 vaccines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fatigue/feeling tired</li> <li>headache</li> <li>fever</li> <li>muscle or joint pain</li> <li>chills/nausea</li> <li>swelling of the lymph nodes</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Measles / mumps / rubella / varicella (chickenpox) containing vaccines</b> <input type="checkbox"/> MMR <input type="checkbox"/> MMRV <input type="checkbox"/> Varicella <i>The following reactions may occur 5-12 days after MMR vaccination:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Temperature (above 39°C) lasting 2-3 days, faint red rash (not infectious), cold like symptoms, feeling unwell</li> <li>Swollen glands, stiff neck and/or joint pain</li> </ul> <i>The following reaction may occur 5-26 days after varicella vaccination:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chickenpox like rash (2-5 lesions) usually at injection site, occasionally elsewhere</li> </ul> <p><b>If a chickenpox like rash develops, cover the rash and avoid contact with people who have lowered immunity until the rash heals.</b></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Diphtheria / tetanus / pertussis (whooping cough) / polio containing vaccines</b> <input type="checkbox"/> DTPa – hepB – IPV – Hib <input type="checkbox"/> DTPa – IPV <input type="checkbox"/> dTpa <input type="checkbox"/> dT <input type="checkbox"/> DTPa <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irritable, crying, unsettled and/or generally unhappy</li> <li>Drowsiness or tiredness</li> <li>Feeling unwell, muscle aches and/or joint pain</li> <li>Decreased appetite and/or nausea</li> <li>Headache (dTpa)</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Meningococcal vaccines</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irritability</li> <li>Drowsiness</li> <li>Decreased appetite</li> <li>Headaches</li> <li>Nausea</li> </ul> <p><b>Paracetamol is recommended before and after the administration of meningococcal B vaccine for children less than 2 years as instructed.</b></p>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Haemophilus influenzae type b</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irritable, crying, unsettled, drowsy and/or generally unhappy</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Oral Rotavirus vaccine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Vomiting and diarrhoea can occur up to 7 days</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hepatitis A (Hep A) vaccine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headache, feeling unwell and/or tiredness</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Pneumococcal 23-valent polysaccharide (Pneumovax23) vaccine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muscle soreness, tiredness and/or chills</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Hepatitis B (Hep B) vaccine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nausea, dizziness</li> <li>Muscle aches and/or joint soreness</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Pneumococcal conjugate (Prevenar 13) vaccine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Irritable, drowsy and/or decreased appetite</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headache, tiredness and/or muscle aches</li> <li>Nausea, dizziness</li> </ul>	<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Herpes zoster (shingles)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Headache, tiredness, muscle or joint aches, feeling unwell</li> <li>Gastrointestinal complaints</li> </ul>
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Inactivated poliomyelitis vaccine (IPV)</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Muscle aches</li> <li>Young babies – crying and/or decreased appetite</li> </ul>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <b>Influenza vaccine</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Drowsiness, tiredness and/or feeling unwell</li> <li>Muscle aches</li> </ul> <p><b>Fever is slightly more common in children when influenza vaccine and pneumococcal vaccine (Prevenar 13®) are given at the same time.</b></p>	

**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.**

Reference:  
Australian Immunisation Handbook; online.