

What to expect after vaccinations

This leaflet tells you about the common side effects of vaccinations that might occur in babies and young children up to five years of age.

After a vaccination, your baby may cry for a little while, but that usually settles soon with a cuddle or a feed. Most babies don't have any other reaction.

Reactions at the site of the injection

Some babies have some swelling, redness or a small hard lump where the injection was given and it may be sore to touch. This usually only lasts two to three days and doesn't need any treatment.

Fevers

A fever is a temperature over 37.5°C. Fevers are quite common in young children, but are usually mild. If your child's face feels hot to the touch and they look red or flushed, he or she may have a fever. You can check their temperature with a thermometer.

If your baby has a fever:

- make sure they don't have too much clothing or bedding on them, and
- give them plenty of cool fluids
- do not put them in a bath, sponge them down or put a fan on them

After vaccination with MenB

Fever can be expected after any vaccination, but is very common when the MenB vaccine is given with the other routine vaccines at two and four months. The fever shows the baby's body is responding to the vaccine, although not getting a fever doesn't mean it hasn't worked. The level of fever depends on the individual child and does not indicate how well the vaccine has worked. Giving paracetamol will reduce the risk of fever, irritability and general discomfort (including pain at the site of the injection) after vaccination.

After each of the two-month and four-month vaccinations you will need to give your baby a total of three doses of paracetamol (2.5ml of infant paracetamol 120mg/5ml suspension) to prevent and treat any potential fever. You should give the first dose of paracetamol as soon as possible after your two-month vaccination visit. You should then give the second dose four to six hours later and the third dose four to six hours after that. You will need to follow the same steps after

If you do not have any paracetamol liquid for infants at home you should get some in time for your first vaccination visit. It is widely available from pharmacies and supermarkets.

your four-month vaccinations. Your nurse will give you more information about paracetamol at your vaccination appointment and you may be given a leaflet to take away with you with written instructions.

After vaccination with MMR

MMR is made up of three different vaccines (measles, mumps and rubella) and these can each cause reactions at different times after the injection.

After six to ten days, the measles vaccine starts to work and may cause a fever, a measles-like rash, and loss of appetite. Individuals with vaccine-associated symptoms are not infectious to others.

Two to three weeks after the injection, the mumps vaccine may cause mumps-like symptoms in some children (fever and swollen glands).

The rubella vaccine may cause a brief rash and possibly a slightly raised temperature, most commonly around 12 to 14 days after the injection, but a rash may also rarely occur up to six weeks later.

Remember, never give medicines that contain aspirin to children under 16.

If you are worried about your child, trust your instincts. Speak to your doctor or call the NHS on **111**.

Call the doctor immediately if, at any time, your child has a temperature of 39-40°C or above, or has a fit.

If the surgery is closed and you can't contact your doctor, trust your instincts and go to the nearest hospital with an emergency department.

If, after having read this leaflet, you are still not happy with your baby's reaction to any vaccination, speak to your practice nurse or GP.

Checking on vaccine safety

Before vaccines are introduced, they have to be licensed by the Medical and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency which assesses their safety and efficacy.

Once they have been introduced into the programme, their safety continues to be constantly monitored so that any new side effects are quickly noticed and investigated.

If you would like more information on the safety of vaccines visit www.mhra.gov.uk

More information

If you would like more information on the side effects of vaccines and vaccinations, pick up the booklet *A guide to immunisations up to 13 months of age* from your surgery or go to NHS Choices www.nhs.uk.

