

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. You can find more information at www.nhs.uk.

After vaccinations given to children under five years of age

Most common side effects are at the site where the injection was given:

- swelling
- redness
- a small hard lump.

These symptoms usually pass within a couple of days and you don't need to do anything about them.

Sometimes your child may develop a fever – see the next column on how to treat it.

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.

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.

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.

How to treat a fever

Keep your child cool by:

- making sure they don't have too many layers of clothes or blankets on, and
- giving them plenty of cool drinks.

If your child has a fever and appears uncomfortable or unwell they can be given a dose of infant paracetamol or ibuprofen liquid. Read the instructions on the bottle very carefully. It is not recommended that these drugs are given before or after vaccination in anticipation of a fever.

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 **NHS Direct on 0845 4647**.

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 www.nhs.uk.