

What to expect after your child's vaccinations

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

After vaccination, your child may cry for a little while. This is the most common reaction and they should settle after a cuddle or a feed (you can feed your child while they have their injection if you feel this will help to distract or soothe them).

Reactions at the injection site

You may notice some swelling, redness or even a small hard lump where the injection was given to your child. Sometimes, this can be sore to touch. This usually only lasts two to three days and is nothing to worry about.

Fevers

A fever is a temperature over 38°C. It's common for children to develop a mild fever after immunisation.

If you notice that your child looks red or flushed or their skin feels hot to the touch, then you may wish to check their temperature using a thermometer.

If your child does have a fever:

- ✓ Give them plenty of fluids
 - ✓ Look out for signs of dehydration
 - ✓ Keep them at home
 - ✓ Give them baby paracetamol if they are distressed and unwell (and over 8 weeks old)
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- ✗ Don't put them in a bath
 - ✗ Don't sponge them down
 - ✗ Don't put a fan on them

After a meningitis B vaccination (Bexsero)

The Meningitis B vaccine can commonly cause side effects that, although not severe, can be uncomfortable.

Your child is likely to feel some pain at the injection site – this could be severe enough to make your child cry when they move the injected limb.

In rare cases, older children may not be willing to walk for a day or two if injected in the leg.

This may be accompanied by redness and swelling at the injection site.

The Meningitis B vaccine commonly causes a mild fever (temperature up to 40°C); rarely, the child may get a higher temperature that may provoke a febrile convulsion (fit as a result of a fever). A febrile convulsion is not usually serious but can be alarming.

Pain or fever can be effectively treated with a dose of paracetamol ('Calpol') at the dose appropriate for the age of the recipient.

Other common side effects include a loss of appetite, skin rash, sleepiness, irritability, unusual crying, vomiting and diarrhoea.

You may want to buy paracetamol liquid for infants before each vaccination visit just in case. We only advise giving the paracetamol if there is a high fever after the vaccine.

NEVER GIVE medicines that contain aspirin to children under 16.

If your child has just had a vaccine for Measles or a combined vaccine for Measles and Rubella

The side effects associated with these vaccines are delayed, causing symptoms of mild measles in around one in 10 children about **one week after receiving the vaccine.**

Typical symptoms include a high temperature, runny nose, sticky eyes and possibly a rash and/or vomiting, usually lasting two to three days.

Treat this as you would any flu-like illness.

Individuals with vaccine-associated symptoms are not infectious to others.

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.

The injection site after a BCG vaccination for tuberculosis

If your child has had the BCG vaccine, changes at the injection site are expected.

Most people vaccinated with BCG develop a local reaction, followed by healing and scar formation, within three months.

You may notice a white lump at the injection site a few minutes after the injection is given. In one to six weeks, a small red blister may appear in the same place. This usually heals within a few weeks.

After six to 12 weeks, the blister may turn into a small, weeping sore. This may ooze a little liquid or puss, in which case it can temporarily be covered with a dressing or breathable plaster.

The sore may take three months to heal and may leave a small scar. This is normal. Occasionally, this can take as long as 12 months.

The vaccine is effective whether or not a lump or scar appears.

No other injections should be given in the same arm for three months after a BCG vaccine.

BCG aftercare

- Leave the site uncovered as much as possible to allow air to get to the vaccination site.
- A waterproof dressing or plaster may be used for swimming, but this should be removed immediately afterwards.
- You can wash the vaccination site using soap, shower gel and water. Do not use cream or lotions. Pat dry after bathing or showering, do not rub.
- Avoid scratching, picking, or knocking any scab off the site.

After the chickenpox vaccine

It's estimated that approximately one to five per cent of people who have a chickenpox vaccination develop a rash between one to six weeks afterwards. If this happens, the varicella vaccine virus could be spread to an unprotected person.

If your child gets a rash, they should stay away from infants, anyone pregnant, and people with a weakened immune system until the rash disappears.

When to seek medical advice after any vaccine

You will have been given information about the potential side effects of any vaccination your child has had at BabyJabs. This information is also available in the patient information leaflets for each vaccine, which can be found on the relevant vaccine pages on our website: **www.babyjabs.co.uk**

In most cases, any side effects self-resolve within a few days.

If, after reading this leaflet, you have questions about your baby's reaction to a vaccine, please speak to your practice nurse or GP.

If you are worried about your child, trust your instincts.

Speak to us, call the NHS on 111 for advice out of hours or go to A&E if your child needs urgent medical attention.