

What to expect after your child gets vaccines?

Vaccines are among the safest medical products available, but like any medicine, they can cause side effects.



Most side effects are minor

Many people who receive vaccines have no side effects. For those who do, the side effects – like fever or soreness, redness, or swelling where the vaccine was given – are usually minor and will generally subside after a day or two. Some side effects such as anxiety with hyperventilation or fainting, caused by the fear of needles, can be associated with the process of immunisation.

Serious side effects are very rare

Some people may develop high fever following vaccination and occasionally, a high fever (which can be caused by many common childhood infections) can cause a seizure, called a febrile seizure. Febrile seizures, which happen more commonly in infants and young children, look serious, but almost never are, and children recover with no lasting effects.

Very rarely, a person will have a true serious reaction to a vaccine, like a severe allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. Anaphylaxis is extremely rare and its occurrence is about one in a million vaccinated individuals, that is, 1 to 2 people may develop anaphylaxis if 1 million doses of a vaccine are given. As a precaution, you will always be asked to wait 10 minutes after receiving a vaccine before leaving.

What if your child has a reaction to a vaccine?

Common vaccine reactions may make your child uncomfortable, but they are not harmful and will generally subside in a day or two.

If your infant or child has developed a fever after immunisation:

- If you are breastfeeding, feed your child more, or offer the child more to drink.
- Take off extra clothes that your child is wearing.
- Give your child medicine, such as paracetamol, to help bring down the fever and make them more comfortable.

If your child cries more than normal or has soreness in the arm or leg where the vaccine was given:

- Cuddle your child to soothe them.
- Put a cool cloth on the arm or leg where your child got the vaccine.
- Give your child medicine, such as paracetamol, to help relieve pain and make them more comfortable.

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