

# Caring for your child after vaccination

Thank you for vaccinating your child! With every vaccination, you are protecting them from serious diseases. You are also protecting people around them who may be at risk.

Your child may need some extra love and care after getting vaccinated. Continue to encourage relaxation, provide cuddles, distract and comfort them.

## What to expect

While most children feel well after getting a vaccine, like any medicine, vaccines can have side effects. These side effects are usually mild.



## Common side effects    How to help

**Pain, swelling, or redness where the vaccine was given**

- Cuddle and comfort your child
- Encourage your child to move the arm or leg where they received the vaccine
- Apply a clean, cool, wet washcloth over the sore area for comfort
- Consider using medication to reduce pain

**Mild fever**

**Headache**

**Fussier or sleepier than usual**

**Tiredness**

**Aches in muscles and/or joints**

- Allow your child to rest
- Consider using medication to relieve your child from fever and/or discomfort
- To find out if your child has a fever, check the temperature by placing an electronic thermometer in the armpit. Normal range for an armpit temperature reading is between 36.5°C to 37.5°C (97.8°F to 99.5°F). A higher temperature indicates a fever.
  - ♦ **Normal temperature range varies depending on the source (e.g. armpit, mouth, or ear)**
- To help reduce fever:
  - ♦ **Remove excess clothing and bedding**
  - ♦ **Give your child plenty to drink (whatever you would normally give them)**



## Using medicine to reduce fever, pain and/or discomfort

- Acetaminophen (e.g. Tylenol, Tempra)
- Ibuprofen (e.g. Advil, Motrin)
- Follow the instructions on the package. Do not give ASA (e.g. Aspirin) to a child under 18 years of age due to the risk of Reye's Syndrome.

## Rare side effects

In rare cases, a child may have a serious reaction. The risks of a serious reaction from a vaccine is minor compared to getting the actual disease. There is a 15-minute wait time after vaccination to make sure that there are no immediate reactions.

**After vaccination, pay close attention for any of the following symptoms or reactions:**

- Rash or hives
- Seizures
- Fever higher than 40°C (104°F)
- Shortness of breath, wheezing or tightness in throat
- Facial swelling
- Joint pain or stiffness
- Increased swelling that lasts four days or longer, or reaches beyond nearest joint
- Severe vomiting or diarrhea
- Any other unusual or unexpected event

**You know your child best. In the event of an emergency, call 911 or take your child to the closest hospital.**

## Report adverse events

Vaccine safety is taken very seriously in Canada. Reporting an adverse event is important to ensure the continued safety of vaccines. An adverse event following immunization (AEFI) is an unwanted or unexpected health effect that happens after someone receives a vaccine. The health effect may or may not be caused by the vaccine but it is still important to report all AEFIs.

Health care providers who administer vaccines are required by law to report AEFIs. As a parent/legal guardian, you should also report AEFIs to the health care provider who gave your child the vaccine. Public Health can help with this process.

## For more information

Contact your health care provider or call Niagara Region Public Health to speak with a public health nurse for any questions or concerns at **905-688-8248** or **1-888-505-6074 ext. 7425**.

Visit Caring for Kids by the Canadian Pediatric Society ([caringforkids.cps.ca](http://caringforkids.cps.ca)) for more information on vaccines for children and youth.