

Protecting your child from life-threatening diseases

Every child should be protected from infectious diseases. For some diseases this is simple, all they need is a vaccination. This is called immunisation. You will normally receive a letter from your GP reminding you when your child's next vaccination is due.

All children should have their preschool booster jabs after they turn three and before they start school

NHS

If they are not immunised, there is more chance of them catching a potentially life-threatening illness and a greater risk of other nursery children being infected.

Vaccinations save lives, however a small number of children may experience side effects such as fever. These side effects are usually mild and will disappear on their own. Your child may get a little redness, swelling or tenderness where the injection was given.

You can treat any fever by giving your child paracetamol or ibuprofen liquid. However, it is not recommended that these medicines are given unless fever symptoms develop.

Parents can find a record of their child's vaccinations in their Red Book. The Red Book is given to all newborn children born in the UK.

If your child was not born in the UK, you may have a record of vaccines your child has previously received from their country of birth.

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Why does my child need the MMR jab?

MMR is needed to protect against measles, mumps and rubella. These are highly infectious viral conditions that can have serious complications.

Measles can be a fatal illness and can cause the following symptoms:

- ear infections
- diarrhoea
- bronchitis
- convulsions (fits)
- brain damage.

Mumps can cause viral meningitis in children.

It can also cause:

- temporary deafness
- inflammation of the pancreas
- painful swelling in the testicles
- Male infertility in later life.

Rubella can cause:

- painful joints (arthritis)
- blood disorders
- swelling of the brain (encephalitis)

Rubella also damages unborn babies and can cause miscarriage.

Can I have single vaccines on the NHS?

Measles, mumps and rubella vaccines are not available separately on the NHS.

The NHS does not recommend single measles, mumps or rubella vaccines because there is no evidence to suggest that they are 'safer' than MMR. Having single vaccines puts your child at risk of catching measles, mumps or rubella in the gaps between the vaccines.

The NHS does not keep a list of private clinics that provide single vaccines, as these vaccines are unlicensed. This means that there is no check on the safety and effectiveness of single vaccines.

How long should I leave it after my child receives their MMR jab before taking them swimming?

Your child can resume normal activities, including swimming, straight after receiving their MMR jab.

To find out more go to:

www.nhs.uk/Planners/vaccinations

or

call the Wandsworth
Immunisation Helpline on

020 8812 6090



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