

Autumn/winter 2015



What to expect after the flu vaccine: Information for parents



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This leaflet tells you about the common side effects of the flu vaccine that your child was given today. Use this information as a guide only. You should always seek medical advice from your GP or school nurse team if you are worried, or call **NHS 24** on **111**.

Common side effects of the flu vaccine

Most children will not experience any side effects. However, if your child had the **nasal (nose) spray**, the most common side effects are:

- a blocked or runny nose
- reduced appetite
- weakness
- muscle aches
- headache.

If your child had the **injectable vaccine**, whilst similar side effects to the nasal spray may occur (except the blocked or runny nose), the most common side effects are at the site where the injection was given:

- swelling
- redness
- tenderness
- small hard lump.

These symptoms usually go away after a couple of days and you don't need to do anything about them.

Some children who have a flu vaccine may also have a slightly raised temperature or experience shivering or feeling tired. Less common side effects include a nosebleed after the nasal spray.

For more information on side effects, please visit www.immunisationscotland.org.uk/childflu

How to treat a fever

A fever is a body 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.

Keep your child cool by:

- making sure they don't have too many layers of clothes or blankets on
- switching down the house heating
- giving them plenty of cool drinks.

There is no evidence that putting your child in a bath, sponging them down or putting a fan on them will lower their fever.

As fevers are usually mild, you only need to give a dose of infant paracetamol or ibuprofen liquid if your child appears uncomfortable or unwell. Read the instructions on the bottle very carefully.

Remember, never give medicines that contain aspirin to children under 16 years of age.

Close contact with family members who are severely immunocompromised

Children who have received the nasal spray vaccine should avoid close contact with family members who are severely immunocompromised (such as bone marrow transplant patients who require isolation) for up to two weeks following immunisation.



A few children will require a second dose

Almost all children will only require one dose of the vaccine. However, a small number of children will need a second dose to make sure that their immunity has fully built up (please see page 6 of the information leaflet or visit www.immunisationscotland.org.uk/childflu).

If your child is at school and requires a second dose, please contact your local NHS Board to make arrangements.

Reporting side effects

You can report suspected side effects of vaccines and medicines through the Yellow Card scheme. This can be done online at www.yellowcard.gov.uk or by calling the Yellow Card hotline on **0808 100 3352** (available Monday to Friday, 10 am to 2 pm).

For more information about the flu vaccine, side effects and other childhood vaccines visit:

www.immunisationscotland.org.uk/childflu

This resource is available in Arabic, Cantonese, Gaelic, Hungarian, Latvian, Lithuanian, Mandarin, Polish, Portuguese, Punjabi, Romanian, Russian, Slovakian, Urdu and in an Easy Read format. NHS Health Scotland is happy to consider requests for other languages and formats.



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