

## Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need

### Summary

- Each person has unique immunisation needs.
- What vaccinations you need is determined by your health, age, lifestyle and occupation.
- Talk to your doctor about your immunisation needs

### Immunisation for life

To be protected from vaccine-preventable diseases, you need immunisations throughout your life, not just in childhood.

The immunisation infographic can help you determine which immunisations you may need.

The **Immunisation for Life infographic (pdf)** shows the factors that are considered when determining your immunisation needs. Click on the vaccines listed in the infographic for more information about that vaccine.



Remember these tools can be used to start a conversation with your doctor. They are not a diagnosis. Discuss your HALO with your doctor or immunisation provider.

### Everyone's HALO is different

Your immunisation needs are influenced by your:

- **Health** – health issues such as premature birth, asthma, diabetes, heart, lung, spleen or kidney conditions will mean you can benefit from immunisation
- **Age** – at different ages you need protection from different diseases
- **Lifestyle** – lifestyle choices like travelling overseas, playing contact sport, sexual activity or smoking, will mean you can benefit from immunisation
- **Occupation** – some jobs expose you to a greater risk of contact with diseases, for example, working in a hospital or day care centre. This means you can benefit from immunisation.

### It is important to be immunised

Immunisation is a proven and safe way to be protected against diseases that cause serious illness and sometimes death. Every day, immunisation saves lives and makes it possible for Victorians to live free from the illness and the

disability caused by many vaccine-preventable diseases.

By reducing the spread of disease, immunisation not only protects those people who have been immunised, but it also protects those in the community who may be unable to receive vaccines themselves.

### **Vaccine costs**

Many of the vaccines listed on the Immunisation for Life poster are provided free by the Australian Government to Medicare card holders. You may still have to pay your doctor or immunisation provider to give you the vaccine. Some vaccines need to be purchased on prescription. Vaccines may be covered by your private health fund. Check with your fund.

### **Vaccine side effects**

Common side effects may occur soon after immunisation and last one to two days. Generally, no treatment is required. If you have a fever, drink more water and do not overdress. Paracetamol can be taken for pain or fever (follow the label for correct use).

Severe side effects, such as an allergic reaction, are very rare and usually happen soon after immunisation. To be safe, your doctor or immunisation provider will ask you to stay nearby for 15 minutes after you are immunised.

### **Find an immunisation service**

Your doctor or your local council can provide immunisation services. Use the [health service locator](#) to find an immunisation provider near you.

### **Where to get help**

- Your **GP (doctor)**
- Your local council immunisation service
- Maternal and child health nurse
- **NURSE-ON-CALL** Tel. **1300 606 024** – for expert health information and advice (24 hours, 7 days)
- Immunisation Section – Department of Health Victoria, Tel. **1300 882 008**
- **National Immunisation Hotline** Tel. **1800 671 811**

### **This page has been produced in consultation with and approved by:**

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