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- Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need

## Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need

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## 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.



The infographic 'Do you need immunisation?' is a colorful guide divided into sections based on life stages and factors. It includes:
 

- Birth:** 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 18 months, 4 years.
- Health:** Everyone's HALO is different.
- Age:** Early Adolescence, Being pregnant, 65-70 years.
- Lifestyle:** Travelling overseas, playing contact sport, sexual activity or smoking.
- Occupation:** Identical and some other similar people.

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](#)

### References

- [The Australian Immunisation Handbook](#), 2018, Department of Health, Australian Government.
- [Immunisation schedule Victoria – April 2019](#), 2019, Department of Health and Human Services, Victorian Government.
- [National Immunisation Program Schedule](#), Department of Health, Australian Government.
- [Pre-immunisation checklist – what to tell your doctor or nurse before immunisation](#), 2017, Department of Health and Human Services, Victorian Government.

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If you are looking for health or medical advice we recommend that you:

- talk to your doctor or pharmacist
- dial triple zero (000) in an emergency
- ring NURSE-ON-CALL Tel. 1300 60 60 24.

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### Immunisation

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### Immunisation basics

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- [Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need](#)

[Everyone's immunisation needs are different and are influence by your health, lifestyle, age and occupation...](#)

- [Pre-immunisation checklist](#)

[This immunisation checklist will help you prepare so you know what to expect and what information you will need to give your GP or clinic staff before your immunisation...](#)

- [Dr Margaret's Story \(video\)](#)

[Access to vaccines has changed lives and protects our children from crippling diseases such as polio...](#)

- [Fight flu this winter](#)

[Fight flu this winter. Protect yourself – get vaccinated...](#)

- [Immune system explained](#)

[The immune system remembers every germ it has ever overcome...](#)

- [Immunisation – common questions](#)

[We answer some common questions about immunisation, including how immunisation works, why it's important and where you can be immunised...](#)

- [Immunisations - vaccinations in Victoria, Australia \(video\)](#)

[Vaccinations are encouraged for all individuals living in the state of Victoria, Australia. The immunisation program in Victoria may be different than other countries, and individuals who have moved...](#)

- [Infections – bacterial and viral](#)

[Many bacterial infections can be treated with antibiotics, but they are useless against viral infections...](#)

- [No Jab No Play](#)

[No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...](#)

- [Ros' Story \(video\)](#)

[Talk to a qualified medical expert like your doctor to find out more about immunisation...](#)

- [Vaccines](#)

[Vaccines trick the body into building immunity against infectious diseases without causing the actual disease...](#)

#### **Timing and schedules**

- [Childhood immunisation](#)

[Being immunised from an early age helps protect your child against serious childhood infections...](#)

- [Immunisation in secondary schools](#)

[Some immunisations are recommended for all Australian teenagers...](#)

- [Immunisation history statements for children](#)

[By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria...](#)

- [No Jab No Play](#)

[No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...](#)

- [10 tips for secondary students on how to deal with immunisation](#)

[10 tips for secondary students on how to deal with immunisation...](#)

- [Fight flu this winter](#)

[Fight flu this winter. Protect yourself – get vaccinated...](#)

- [How to find your vaccination records](#)

[If you've recently arrived in Australia or missed out on an immunisation for any reason, you may need catch-up doses...](#)

- [Immunisation – common questions](#)

[We answer some common questions about immunisation, including how immunisation works, why it's important and where you can be immunised...](#)

- [Immunisations – catch-ups and boosters](#)

[If you've recently arrived in Australia or missed out on an immunisation for any reason, you may need catch-up doses...](#)

- [Immunisations for older people](#)

[Immunisations are important for you as you get older, because your immune system can become less effective at protecting you from some diseases...](#)

- [My Health, Learning and Development book](#)

[My Health and Development Record is designed for parents to keep and record their child's milestones, health, growth, development and immunisations...](#)

- [Pre-immunisation checklist](#)

[This immunisation checklist will help you prepare so you know what to expect and what information you will need to give your GP or clinic staff before your immunisation...](#)

- [Recent arrivals, asylum seekers and family support services](#)

[Provides an overview of family support programs and health services available to refugees and asylum seekers living in Victoria...](#)

- [Who provides immunisations in Victoria](#)

[Immunisations in Victoria are provided by local councils, GPs and specially qualified nurses in medical clinics and community health services, some Maternal and Child Health nurses, travel clinics and...](#)

## **Immunisation throughout life**

- [10 tips for secondary students on how to deal with immunisation](#)

[10 tips for secondary students on how to deal with immunisation...](#)

- [Fight flu this winter](#)

[Fight flu this winter. Protect yourself – get vaccinated...](#)

- [Flu \(influenza\) – immunisation](#)

[Influenza immunisation is recommended for people in known high risk groups...](#)

- [How to find your vaccination records](#)

[If you've recently arrived in Australia or missed out on an immunisation for any reason, you may need catch-up doses...](#)

- [Immunisation and pregnancy](#)

[Immunisation can protect a woman and her unborn baby against many infectious diseases...](#)

- [Immunisation – common questions](#)

[We answer some common questions about immunisation, including how immunisation works, why it's important and where you can be immunised...](#)

- [Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need](#)

[Everyone's immunisation needs are different and are influenced by your health, lifestyle, age and occupation...](#)

- [Immunisation – DTP, polio, hep B and Hib](#)

[A number of combined immunisations against diphtheria, tetanus and other infectious diseases are available to provide protection at various life stages...](#)

- [Immunisation history statements for children](#)

[By law, parents or guardians must provide an Immunisation History Statement when enrolling children in any childcare service, kindergarten or primary school in Victoria...](#)

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[If you've recently arrived in Australia or missed out on an immunisation for any reason, you may need catch-up doses...](#)

- [Immunisations for older people](#)

[Immunisations are important for you as you get older, because your immune system can become less effective at protecting you from some diseases...](#)

- [Immunisations for work](#)

[Some jobs have a higher risk of exposure to infectious diseases, so if your job is one of these, it's a good idea to check your immunisation status...](#)

- [Melissa's story \(video\)](#)

[Melissa shares her story of how her baby caught chickenpox at 5 weeks old...](#)

- [No Jab No Play](#)

[No Jab No Play – from 1 January 2016, all parents/guardians seeking to enrol their child at an early childhood service in Victoria must provide evidence that the child is fully immunised for their age...](#)

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#### **Common concerns about immunisation**

- [Why immunisation is important](#)

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- [Pre-immunisation checklist](#)

[This immunisation checklist will help you prepare so you know what to expect and what information you will need to give your GP or clinic staff before your immunisation...](#)

- [Immunisation – side effects](#)

[Find out more about possible side effects of immunisation...](#)

- [Immunisations for older people](#)

[Immunisations are important for you as you get older, because your immune system can become less effective at protecting you from some diseases...](#)

- [Immunisation – common questions](#)

[We answer some common questions about immunisation, including how immunisation works, why it's important and where you can be immunised...](#)

#### **Travel and immunisation**

- [Diphtheria](#)

[Diphtheria is a serious bacterial disease that causes severe inflammation of the nose, throat and windpipe...](#)

- [Flu \(influenza\) – immunisation](#)

[Influenza immunisation is recommended for people in known high risk groups...](#)

- [Haemophilus influenzae type b \(Hib\) immunisation](#)

[The National Immunisation Program provides children with free immunisation against Haemophilus influenzae type b \(Hib\) and meningococcal group C disease...](#)

- [Hepatitis B – immunisation](#)

[Immunisation against hepatitis B reduces the risk of infection in babies...](#)

- [Human papillomavirus \(HPV\) – immunisation](#)

[The human papillomavirus \(HPV\) vaccine helps prevent infection with HPV that causes cervical cancer...](#)

- [Immunisation – deciding which vaccines you need](#)

[Everyone's immunisation needs are different and are influenced by your health, lifestyle, age and occupation...](#)

- [Immunisation – DTP, polio, hep B and Hib](#)

[A number of combined immunisations against diphtheria, tetanus and other infectious diseases are available to provide protection at various life stages...](#)

- [Measles, mumps, rubella, varicella \(chickenpox\) – immunisation](#)

[Immunisation is the best protection against measles, mumps, rubella and varicella \(chickenpox\)...](#)

- [Meningococcal disease – immunisation](#)

[Meningococcal group vaccines provide good protection against meningococcal group diseases...](#)

- [Pneumococcal disease – immunisation](#)

[Immunisation can substantially reduce the risk of pneumococcal disease, especially in young children...](#)

#### **A-Z of immunisations and vaccines**

- [Pre-immunisation checklist](#)

[This immunisation checklist will help you prepare so you know what to expect and what information you will need to give your GP or clinic staff before your immunisation...](#)

- [Chickenpox – immunisation](#)



[Immunisation against chickenpox can protect your child from getting chickenpox and from the possible serious complications of chickenpox...](#)

- [Diphtheria](#)

[Diphtheria is a serious bacterial disease that causes severe inflammation of the nose, throat and windpipe...](#)

- [Flu \(influenza\) – immunisation](#)

[Influenza immunisation is recommended for people in known high risk groups...](#)

- [Haemophilus influenzae type b \(Hib\)](#)

[Haemophilus influenzae type b \(Hib\) is a bacterium that causes a life-threatening infection that can lead to serious illness, especially in children...](#)

- [Haemophilus influenzae type b \(Hib\) immunisation](#)

[The National Immunisation Program provides children with free immunisation against Haemophilus influenzae type b \(Hib\) and meningococcal group C disease...](#)

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- [Measles, mumps, rubella, varicella \(chickenpox\) – immunisation](#)

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- [Pneumococcal disease – immunisation](#)

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- [Polio – immunisation](#)

[You need several doses of the vaccine before you are fully protected against polio...](#)

- [Rotavirus – immunisation](#)

[Children need several doses of the vaccine to reduce the risk of rotavirus...](#)

- [Tetanus](#)

[Tetanus is a life-threatening disease and immunisation is the best way to reduce your risk...](#)

- [Typhoid and paratyphoid](#)

[Almost every Australian case of typhoid or paratyphoid fever is caught overseas...](#)

- [Why immunisation is important](#)

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- [Flu \(influenza\) – immunisation](#)

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- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

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- [A Healthy Start to School](#)

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- [Asthma explained](#)

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What vaccines you need depends on your **Health**, **Age**, **Lifestyle** and **Occupation**



Everyone's **HALO** is different

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