What to expect after your child's

COVID-19 vaccination

A guide for parents of children aged 5 to 11 years of age

Find out more at nidirect.gov.uk/covid-vaccine

The health service is offering the COVID-19 vaccine to all eligible children.

This leaflet tells you what to expect after your child has had their vaccination.

Side effects

Like all medicines, vaccines can cause side effects. Most of these are mild and short-term and not all children get them. The very common side effects should only last a day or two. The Pfizer vaccine tends to cause more side effects after the second dose of the vaccine.

Very common side effects in the first day or two include:

- having a painful, heavy feeling and tenderness in the arm where they had their injection
- feeling tired
- headache, aches and chills

They may also have flu like symptoms with episodes of shivering and shaking for a day or two. However, a high temperature could also indicate that they have COVID-19 or another infection.

They should rest. You can give them paracetamol to help make them feel better. Please check that the dose and type of paracetamol is correct for their age.

You can find more information on paracetamol here www.nhs.uk/medicines/paracetamol-for-children.

An uncommon side effect is swollen glands in the armpit or neck on the same side as the arm as they had the vaccine. This can last for around 10 days, but if it lasts longer see your doctor.

What to do if you are concerned about their symptoms

These symptoms normally last less than a week. If their symptoms seem to get worse or if you are concerned, you can call their GP (family doctor) or Out of Hours service. If you do seek advice from a doctor or nurse, make sure you tell them about their vaccination (show them the vaccination card) so that they can assess your child properly.

You can also report suspected side effects of vaccines and medicines online through the Yellow Card scheme or by downloading the Yellow Card app.

coronavirus-yellowcard.mhra.gov.uk

Are there other more serious side effects?

Recently, cases of inflammation of the heart (called myocarditis or pericarditis) have been reported very rarely after the adult dose of COVID-19 vaccines.

These cases have been seen mostly in younger men within a few days after vaccination. Most of these people recovered quickly and felt better following rest and simple treatments.

You should seek medical advice urgently from your GP or Emergency Department if your child experiences:

- chest pain
- shortness of breath
- feelings of having a fast-beating, fluttering, or pounding heart

Can your child catch COVID-19 from the vaccine?

Your child cannot catch COVID-19 from the vaccine but it is possible to have caught COVID-19 and not realise that they have the symptoms until after their vaccination appointment.

The most important symptoms of COVID-19 are recent onset of any of the following:

- a new continuous cough
- a high temperature
- a loss of, or change in, their normal sense of taste or smell (anosmia)

Although a fever can occur within a day or two of vaccination, if your child has any other COVID-19 symptoms or their fever lasts longer, stay at home and arrange to have a test.

What to do next

 After your child's vaccination, you should be given a record card. If your child needs a second dose their next appointment will be in about 8 to 12 weeks' time. The second dose will give them longer lasting protection.

Keep your child's record card safe. If your child needs a second dose, don't forget to keep your next appointment.

If your child is not well for their appointment

If your child is unwell, it is better to wait until they have recovered to have their vaccine.

Your child should not attend a vaccine appointment if they are self-isolating or waiting for a COVID-19 test. Ideally you should wait 12 weeks after your child has had a positive COVID-19 test or at least 4 weeks if your child is at higher risk.

Will the vaccine protect your child?

The COVID-19 vaccine that your child has had has been shown to reduce the chance of them suffering from COVID-19 disease.

Millions of doses of the vaccine have been given worldwide. The vaccine is highly effective in children and young people.

It may take a few weeks for your child's body to build up some protection from the vaccine. Like all medicines, no vaccine is completely effective, so you should continue to take recommended precautions to avoid your child picking up the infection.

Some children may still get COVID-19 despite having a vaccination, but this should be less severe.

What your child can do after they've had the vaccine

The vaccine cannot give your child COVID-19 infection, and it will reduce their chance of becoming ill.

It is still important to continue to follow current national guidance. Your child can continue going to school, after they have had the vaccine.

To protect yourself and your family, friends and colleagues, you must still:

- think about social distancing
- wear a face covering where advised
- wash your hands carefully and frequently
- open windows to let in fresh air
- follow the current guidance
  www.nidirect.gov.uk/coronavirus

How COVID-19 is spread

COVID-19 is spread through droplets breathed out from the nose or mouth, particularly when speaking or coughing. It can also be picked up by touching your eyes, nose and mouth after contact with contaminated objects and surfaces.

Further information

Please read the product information leaflet for more details on the vaccine, including possible side effects, on the Coronavirus Yellow Card website.

You can also report suspected side effects on the same website or by downloading the Yellow Card app. Further information is available from www.nidirect.gov.uk/covid-vaccine