



Recommended vaccinations for selected children

All children in Sweden are entitled to free vaccination against nine serious diseases (see the Information leaflet The Swedish Immunisation Programme for Children). All girls are also offered vaccination against the human papilloma virus (HPV) (see the Information leaflet Vaccination against HPV for Girls). Selected children are also offered free vaccination against hepatitis B, tuberculosis, influenza and pneumococcal disease.

HEPATITIS B

Hepatitis B is a virus that causes liver disease and is spread via blood and other body fluids. Some people do not notice the disease at all, while others can be very ill for several months. Most people recover completely, but in a few people the virus remains in the body and can cause liver damage or liver cancer at a much later time. The risk is greatest if you are infected as a child.

Who should be vaccinated?

Vaccination is recommended for children who are at increased risk of infection. These are primarily children who have a family member with hepatitis B or children whose parents come from a country where hepatitis B is more common than in Sweden. Most county councils have decided to offer the vaccine against hepatitis B to all children.

What protection does the vaccine give?

The vaccine is highly effective and almost all children who are vaccinated develop strong protection. This protection most probably lasts throughout their lifetime.

When is the vaccine given?

The vaccine is normally given at three time points, either together with the other vaccines during infancy (at 3, 5 and 12 months of age) or according to an individual schedule.

What are the possible side effects?

Most children have no or only mild side effects after vaccination against hepatitis B. Any side effects normally pass after a few days. The following side effects have been reported:

Common (seen in more than 1 in 100 vaccinated children): redness, swelling and tenderness at the injection site.

Rare (fewer than 1 in 1,000 vaccinated children): fever, itching, headache, vomiting, diarrhoea, skin rash, allergic reaction.

TUBERCULOSIS

Tuberculosis is an infection caused by bacteria and is spread through the air by coughing. It generally affects the lungs, but other organs can also be affected. In most cases, the disease develops slowly, with a chronic cough, weight loss and fever, but it can also lie dormant in the body for many years before breaking out again. Tuberculosis in the dormant form is not infectious.

Who should be vaccinated?

Vaccination is recommended for children whose family comes from a country where tuberculosis is more common than in Sweden.

What protection does the vaccine give?

In children, the vaccine provides good protection against severe forms of tuberculosis. The protective effect decreases over time.

When is the vaccine given?

The vaccine is normally given as a single dose from six months of age, but can be given earlier if the risk of infection is high.

What happens after the vaccination?

The vaccination causes a small skin infection. Two to four weeks after vaccination a small hard spot forms at the injection site. This hard spot grows and becomes red, and after a while becomes a sore that can weep pus. The sore must be left alone and normally heals by itself after a few weeks. Swimming in a pool should be avoided while the sore is open. Some children never get a sore, only a hard spot that disappears after a few weeks or months.

What are the possible side effects?

The following side effects have been reported:

Rare (fewer than 1 in 1,000 vaccinated children): an abnormally large sore that takes a long time to heal, fever, headache, allergic reaction.

INFLUENZA

Influenza is an infection of the airways that is caused by a virus. It is spread through the air when a person coughs or sneezes. Influenza returns each winter and between 2% and 15% of the population become ill. Influenza often passes by itself but can result in pneumonia.

Who should be vaccinated?

Vaccination against seasonal influenza is recommended for children who are in medical risk groups. Talk to your child's doctor if your child has a severe allergy to eggs, because most influenza vaccines use viruses grown in chicken eggs.

How long does the protection last?

Because the influenza virus is continually changing, a new vaccine must be produced before each season. The protection disappears within a year, so vaccination is needed every year.

When is the vaccine given?

Children can be vaccinated from six months of age. The vaccine is given as one or two doses depending on the age of the child. If two doses are used, they are given with a four-week interval.

What are the possible side effects?

Most children have no or only mild side effects from influenza vaccinations. Any side effects normally pass within a few days. The following side effects have been reported:

Common (seen in more than 1 in 100 vaccinated children): redness, swelling and tenderness at the injection site, fever.

Rare (fewer than 1 in 1,000 vaccinated children): allergic reaction.

PNEUMOCOCCAL DISEASE

Pneumococci are bacteria that can cause mild infections such as inflammation of the ears and sinuses. However, pneumococci also cause very serious and sometimes life-threatening diseases such as pneumonia, blood poisoning and meningitis. There is also a risk of complications such as various forms of brain damage.

Who should be vaccinated?

General vaccination of infants against pneumococcal disease was introduced on January 1, 2009. All infants are offered free vaccination in their first 12 months of life.

Both vaccinated and non-vaccinated children who are at risk of becoming seriously ill from pneumococcal disease may require additional vaccination, regardless of their age. This applies to children with a severely suppressed immune system or a chronic disease that gives an increased risk of serious illness.

What protection does the vaccine give?

The vaccine provides good protection against serious pneumococcal disease caused by the types of pneumococci that are included in the vaccine.

When is the vaccine given?

Children who are in a risk group are vaccinated in accordance with an individual schedule.

What are the possible side effects?

Most children have no or only mild side effects from the vaccine against pneumococci. Any side effects normally pass within a few days. The following side effects have been reported:

Common (seen in more than 1 in 100 vaccinated children): redness, swelling and tenderness at the injection site, fever, diarrhoea, vomiting.

Rare (fewer than 1 in 1,000 vaccinated children): acute hypersensitivity reaction, itching, febrile seizures, urticaria (nettle rash), paleness, lethargy.

THINGS TO THINK ABOUT!

Before the vaccination: Tell personnel if your child is ill, has an underlying condition or allergy, or has reacted in any way after a previous vaccination.

After the vaccination: If your child appears to be ill after the vaccination, you should contact the child health centre, the student health service or the general healthcare services. Healthcare personnel must report all reactions associated with a vaccination regardless of whether they are a result of the vaccine or not.

Make sure you keep a record of your child's vaccinations using the child health centre card or booklet, or in some other way.



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