

APPENDIX F

Medical Management of Vaccine Reactions in Children and Teens in a Community Setting

The table below describes steps to take if an adverse reaction occurs after vaccination.

Administering any medicine, including vaccines, can cause an adverse reaction. Always verify container labels to ensure the correct product is being administered. To reduce the risk an adverse reaction, screen patients for vaccine contraindications and precautions before vaccination (see “Screening Checklist for Contraindications to Vaccines for Children and Teens” at www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4060.pdf).

When adverse reactions do occur, they can range from minor (e.g., soreness, itching) to serious (e.g., anaphylaxis). Be prepared.

Vaccinators should know how to recognize allergic reactions, including anaphylaxis. Have a plan and supplies ready to provide appropriate medical care if an event occurs.

REACTION	SIGNS AND SYMPTOMS	MANAGEMENT
Injection site	Soreness, redness, itching, or swelling	Apply a wet cloth to the injection site. Consider giving medication to reduce pain (e.g., Tylenol) or itching (e.g., Benadryl) if needed.
	Slight bleeding	Apply pressure and an adhesive compress over the injection site.
	Continuous bleeding	Place thick layer of gauze pads over site and maintain direct and firm pressure; raise the bleeding injection site (e.g., arm) above the level of the patient’s heart.
Psychological fright and syncope (fainting)	Anxiety before injection	Have patient sit or lie down for the vaccination.
	Paleness, sweating, coldness of the hands and feet, nausea, light-headedness, dizziness, weakness, or visual disturbances	Have patient lie flat. Loosen any tight clothing and maintain open airway. Apply cool, damp cloth to patient’s face and neck. Keep patient under close observation until full recovery.
	Fall, without loss of consciousness	Check the patient for injury before trying to move the patient. Place patient flat on back with feet elevated.
	Loss of consciousness	Check the patient for injury before trying to move the patient. Place patient flat on back with feet elevated. Call 911 if patient does not recover promptly.
Anaphylaxis	Skin and mucosal symptoms such as generalized hives, itching, or flushing; swelling of lips, face, throat, or eyes. Respiratory symptoms such as nasal congestion, change in voice, sensation of throat closing, stridor, shortness of breath, wheeze, or cough. Gastrointestinal symptoms such as nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, cramping abdominal pain. Cardiovascular symptoms such as collapse, dizziness, tachycardia, hypotension.	See next page for details on treating anaphylaxis.

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