

Vaccine Side Effects (CDC)

At a glance: Vaccines are held to the highest safety standards. Most people who receive vaccines experience no, or only mild, reactions such as fever or soreness at the injection site. Very rarely, people experience more serious side effects, like allergic reactions.

Like any drug, vaccines are capable of causing serious problems, even death. However, a decision not to immunize a child also involves risk. It is a decision to put a child at risk for contracting serious, and potentially deadly, diseases. Getting vaccinated is much safer than getting the disease vaccines prevent.

This page answers some common questions about vaccine side effects and describes the mild, moderate, and severe side effects associated with specific vaccines.

Common questions about vaccine side effects:

How many people experience side effects following vaccination?

In most cases, vaccines cause no side effects, or only mild reactions such as fever or soreness at the injection site. Very rarely, people experience more serious side effects, like allergic reactions. Severe reactions to vaccines occur so rarely that the risk is usually difficult to calculate.

Do multiple vaccinations increase the risk of side effects?

Many parents worry when their child needs to receive more than one vaccine at the same time. **Studies show that giving a child multiple vaccinations for different diseases at the same time is safe, effective and does not increase the risk of side effects.** For more information, [click here](#).

What signs of a moderate or severe reaction should I look for?

After you or your child are vaccinated, look for any unusual conditions, such as a serious allergic reaction, high fever or behavior changes. Signs of a serious allergic reaction include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat or dizziness, and swelling of the throat.

What should be done if someone has a reaction to a vaccine?

- Call a doctor. If the person is having a severe reaction take him or her to a doctor right away.
- After any reaction, tell your doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given.
- Ask your doctor, nurse, or health department to file a [Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System](#) (VAERS) form, or call VAERS yourself at 1-800-822-7967.
- In the rare event that a vaccine injures a child, he or she may be compensated through the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program (VICP). For more information about VICP visit <http://bhpr.hrsa.gov/vicp/> or call 1-800-338-2382.