

Pneumococcal Vaccination

Pneumococcal polysaccharide vaccine is recommended for active immunisation against pneumococcal disease. **Normally, this vaccination is only given once and no boosters are usually required.** It is usually administered to all children as part of their normal vaccination schedule. It should also be administered to children/adults who fall into the risk groups listed below.

- a. Patients aged 65 years or over
- b. Patients with one or more of the following conditions;
 - Chronic lung problems
 - Chronic Heart disease
 - Chronic Kidney disease
 - Chronic Liver disease
 - Diabetes
 - Immuno-suppression or weakened immune system
 - Individuals with cochlear implants
 - Individuals with cerebrospinal fluid leaks
- c. Asplenia or dysfunction of the spleen (revaccination is recommended every 5 years)

Adverse Reactions

The most common side effects include mild soreness and induration at the site of the injection which will usually last one to three days and less commonly a low grade fever may occur. To reduce any associated discomfort, you should make sure to move your arm around after the vaccine. You can also take pain relief such as paracetamol and use a cold compress on the injection site.

If you're concerned about the redness and swelling, particularly if it increases in size or does not decrease after a few days, please contact the practice to speak to a clinician. In the event of any signs of an allergic reaction such as difficulty in breath please seek immediate medical attention.

Who Cannot Have Vaccines?

There are very few individuals who cannot receive the pneumococcal vaccine. The vaccine should not be given to those who have had a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine or to any component of the vaccine. Other allergic conditions, such as rashes, may occur more commonly and are not contraindications to further immunisation. If you are acutely unwell, immunisation should be postponed until you are fully recovered.