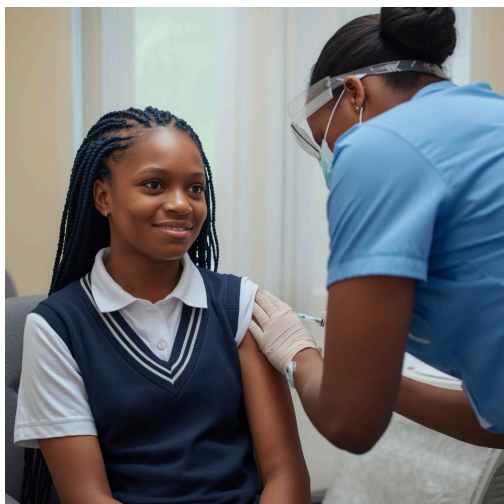


IMMUNISATIONS

STAYING INFORMED, STAYING HEALTHY



WHY ARE IMMUNISATIONS IMPORTANT?

Vaccines are essential medicines that protect individuals from serious diseases by teaching the immune system to recognise and fight harmful pathogens. They are the safest way to protect against diseases like diphtheria, polio, measles and meningitis. These diseases can be extremely serious, causing long-term complications, disabilities, and even death.

IMMUNISATIONS NEWSLETTER 2026

Measles and meningitis outbreaks in spring 2026 have reminded us of how quickly infections can spread in education settings, including schools and nurseries. Diseases like measles and chickenpox are highly contagious and can spread rapidly among unvaccinated children and young people.

The good news is that these diseases are preventable with vaccines, which are offered free of charge through the NHS and as part of the routine immunisation programme for children.

This newsletter answers some of the most frequently asked questions about vaccinations. It also includes information on where and how you can get up to date if any doses have been missed.

WHAT IS THE ROUTINE VACCINE PROGRAMME?

Staying up to date with [routine vaccinations](#) provides the best protection against serious diseases.

NHS childhood vaccinations are free. Your GP will contact you when your child is due. You may receive an invite by letter, phone call, text or email. Anyone in England can register with a GP surgery for free. You do not need proof of address, immigration status, ID or an NHS number.

The routine childhood immunisation programme starts from 8 weeks old, with key pre-school boosters at 1 year and 3 years 4 months. Vaccines are also given to young people at school during Years 8 and 9. These protect against preventable diseases, including some cancers, and illnesses more common in young people, such as meningitis.

You can check your child's Red Book or contact your GP to make sure they are up to date. Your GP can also provide any missed vaccines.

**ACCESS
SUPPORT**



**SCAN THE QR CODE TO ACCESS RESOURCES
AND LINKS TO SUPPORT YOUR HEALTH AND
WELLBEING.
INFORMATION ON VACCINATIONS IS UNDER THE
'IMMUNISATION' COLUMN**



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HOW DO VACCINES WORK?

Each vaccine works slightly differently, but all aim to give the body long-term protection against disease.

Vaccines contain a harmless form of the bacteria or virus that causes the disease. This allows the immune system to recognise it without making your child ill, and to produce a response to fight it off. The immune system then remembers it, so if your child is exposed in the future, their body can respond quickly and prevent infection.

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IS IT BETTER TO GAIN IMMUNITY THROUGH INFECTION?

The immunisation schedule has been carefully designed to protect your child before they are likely to be exposed to serious diseases. It is based on how the immune system develops at different ages and when children and young people are most at risk.

Delaying vaccines can leave your child vulnerable at a time when they are most likely to experience serious complications.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW THE VACCINATION SCHEDULE?

- No. Gaining immunity through infection means your child would need to become ill first. This can pose serious risks, including severe illness, long-term complications, and in some cases, death.
- Infections such as measles and meningitis can also spread to others, increasing the risk to family and the wider community.
- Vaccination allows your child to build immunity safely, without becoming ill or passing infections on.

WHERE TO GET IMMUNISATIONS IN CITY AND HACKNEY

IT'S NEVER TOO LATE TO GET UP TO DATE WITH MISSED VACCINES. CATCHING UP HELPS ENSURE YOUR CHILD IS FULLY PROTECTED. IF YOUR CHILD ATTENDS SCHOOL, YOU CAN ALSO BOOK A CATCH-UP CLINIC WITH VACCINATION UK ON 0207 101 2026 OR BY VISITING [HTTPS://WWW.SCHOOLVACCINATION.UK/CATCH-UP-CLINICS/HACKNEY](https://www.schoolvaccination.uk/catch-up-clinics/hackney)

Can receiving multiple vaccines overload the immune system?

No. Your child's immune system fights off millions of germs every day.

The amount used in vaccines is very small in comparison, and does not put extra strain on the immune system.

Even if several vaccines are given at once, only a tiny fraction of the immune system's capacity is used.

What causes vaccine side effects, and what does this mean?

Like any other medicine, vaccine side effects can occur - these are normally mild and short-lived. This reaction is a natural response and is a sign that the body is building protection and developing long-term immunity.

What is a booster vaccine and why does my child need one? : A booster is an extra dose that strengthens the immune response. Protection from some vaccines can reduce over time, so boosters help maintain strong, long-lasting immunity. Keeping up to date with boosters ensures your child stays fully protected.

WHERE TO SEEK HELP

- School Nurse
- GP
- Health Visitor
- Vaccination UK

<https://www.nhs.uk/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/>



Scan the QR code to access resources and links to support your health and wellbeing. For vaccination information scroll to the 'Immunisations Tab

