

Post – Immunization Reactions

If you believe your child is having a reaction to a recent immunization, such as fever or swelling, please refer to this handout before you call our office. Most of your question will probably be answered below.

Symptoms

- Most local swelling, redness and pain at the injection site begin within 24 hours of the shot. It usually lasts 2 to 3 days, but with DTaP can last 7 days.
- Fever with most vaccines begin within 24hrs and lasts 1 to 2 days.
- With live vaccines (MMR and chickenpox), fever and systemic reactions usually begin between 1 and 4 weeks.
- Severe allergic reactions are very rare but can occur with any vaccine

When to call

Call 911 Now if:

- Difficulty with breathing or swallowing
- Not moving or very weak
- Unresponsive or difficult to awaken

Call our office immediately if:

- Your child looks or acts very sick
- Fever over 104 degrees F and not improved 2 hours after ibuprofen or acetaminophen
- High-pitched, unusual crying present over 1hr
- Crying continuously over 3 hours
- Redness or red streaking around the injection site begins over 48hrs after the shot
- Redness of red streak around the injection site that becomes larger than 1in

Call our office the following morning if:

- You think your child needs to be seen, but not urgently
- Fever present for more than 3 days
- Fever returns after gone for over 24hrs

Call our office during regular business hours if:

- You have other questions or concerns
- Redness, swelling or pain at the injection site persists over 3 days and is getting worse
- Fussiness from vaccines persists over 3 days

Home Care Advice

- **Reassurance:** Immunizations (vaccines) protect your child against serious diseases. All of these above reaction mean the vaccine is working and can be expected and considered normal side effects. Your child is producing new antibodies to protect against the real disease. Most of these symptoms will only last 2 or 3 days.
- **Local Reaction at Injection Site:** Use a cold pack as needed. May give acetaminophen or ibuprofen (ibuprofen can only be used for children older than 6 months).
- **Fever:** Fever with most vaccines begins within 12hrs and lasts 2 to 3 days. This is normal. For fever greater than 102 degrees F, give acetaminophen or ibuprofen.
- **General reaction:** all vaccines can cause mild fussiness, irritability and restless sleep. While this is usually due to soreness at the injection site, sometimes the cause is less clear. Some children sleep more than usual. A decreased appetite and activity level are also common. These symptoms usually resolve within 24-48hrs.