



Guide for parents

Adolescent vaccination – Year 10

Key points:

- Vaccination protects your adolescent and community from serious diseases.
- Most adolescents experience little to no discomfort from vaccinations.
- Your GP or pharmacist may also be able to vaccinate your adolescent. If you prefer this option, please let our nurses know by selecting the 'Decline' option when you fill out the form.

Vaccinations offered in high school

In Year 10, your adolescent will be offered free, routine vaccinations to protect them against vaccine-preventable diseases. A nursing team, certified in vaccinations, will visit your adolescent's school to offer:

- **Meningococcal ACWY** – (one injection) protects against four strains of meningococcal bacteria: A, C, W and Y.

Further information is available at healthywa.wa.gov.au/adolescentimmunisation

What you need to do

Complete the form (consent or decline)

Your adolescent cannot be vaccinated at school without your consent. Whether you consent or decline, it is important to complete the form ahead of the nursing team's visit. Only a parent or legal guardian can give consent or decline vaccination for an adolescent.

The form can be completed:

- **Online** (preferred method) – health.wa.gov.au/adolescentconsent
- **Hard copy** – Completing the online form is preferred. If you are unable to complete the online form, download a copy from healthywa.wa.gov.au/adolescentconsent and return the completed form to the school.

Note: If your adolescent attends a school on **Cocos Islands** or **Christmas Island**, complete and return the paper form provided by the school. If your dependent is an **adolescent under the care of the Department of Communities**, contact your dependent's case worker to complete a form and return it to their school.

More about meningococcal vaccination

Meningococcal disease

Meningococcal disease is an uncommon, but sometimes life-threatening illness. It can progress very quickly. The disease is a result of a bacterial infection of the blood and/or the membranes that line the spinal cord and brain.

Meningococcal disease can affect any age group, however some of the highest rates of carriage and illness occur among adolescents. This age group can also transmit bacteria to people who are at an increased risk of infection such as younger children.

It is anticipated that, as well as protecting adolescents, vaccinating Year 10 students will reduce transmission of the bacteria to others and help prevent infections within the wider community.

The Meningococcal ACWY vaccine is safe and effective and protects against 4 types of meningococcal bacteria: A, C, W and Y.

What to expect

When will the nursing team visit my adolescent's high school?

The nursing teams visit high schools across WA throughout the year. Your school will let you know before vaccination day via the school's preferred communication method. If you're unsure, check with the school.

How to prepare your adolescent for vaccination

While the vaccination itself is very quick, the anticipation may cause stress for some students.

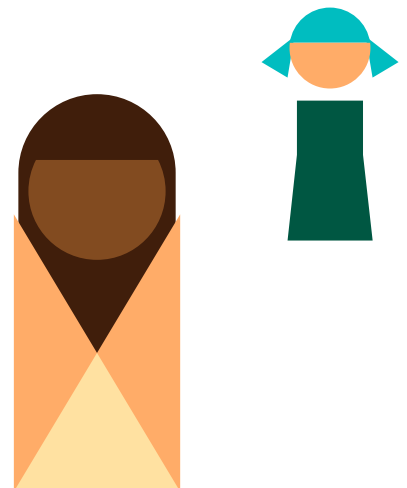
Nursing teams work extensively with high school students and are skilled at making sure your adolescent is informed, comfortable and cared for. However, there are simple things you can do to make sure your adolescent is prepared:

- Talk to your adolescent about how they are feeling about vaccinations and let them know what to expect.
- Share with your adolescent why vaccinations are important: it helps to protect them and others in the community who may be more vulnerable to disease.
- Discuss with your adolescent the diseases they'll be protected against by receiving the vaccination.
- Reassure with facts.
- Make sure your adolescent eats their regular meals and has water to remain hydrated.

Before your adolescent is vaccinated

Let the nursing team know if your adolescent:

- has had a severe reaction following any past vaccination
- has a history of severe allergy where vaccination is not recommended
- has had a live vaccine within the last month. For example, tuberculosis, measles, yellow fever
- has had an injection of immunoglobulin or whole blood transfusion in the last 3 months
- has a disease that lowers immunity (for example, leukaemia, cancer, HIV/AIDS) or is having treatment which lowers immunity (for example, steroid drugs such as hydrocortisone or prednisolone, radiotherapy, chemotherapy)
- lives with someone who has a disease that lowers immunity or who is having treatment that lowers immunity.



If your adolescent is unwell or misses vaccination day

In most cases, if your adolescent has a mild, common illness, such as a cold with a low-grade fever, they can still be safely vaccinated.

On the day, the nursing team will assess your adolescent before giving the vaccination. If for any reason they decide your adolescent shouldn't be vaccinated, your adolescent will bring home information with further advice.

It is recommended your adolescent is vaccinated as close as possible to the recommended age, however if your adolescent does miss their vaccination at school there are options to catch up. You can visit any participating:

- pharmacy
- general practice
- community immunisation clinic
- Aboriginal Medical Service.

Note: While the vaccination is free, some providers may charge for consultations.

After vaccination

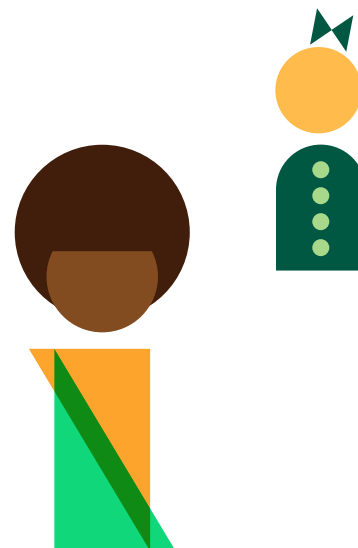
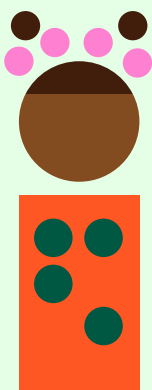
Students are required to sit and stay at the place of vaccination for at least 15 minutes to check they are doing well. After school, make sure they feel well and talk to them about the experience. Your adolescent will be given an aftercare card and you can ask them to share it with you. You may receive an SMS from WA Health a few days after vaccination to help monitor side effects.

Vaccines, like any other medicines, can cause side effects. Most side effects are usually mild and short lasting and do not need treatment. Most people experience few to no side effects and serious side effects are very rare. Common reactions may include pain, redness and swelling at the injection site, fever, irritability, drowsiness, decreased appetite, headaches, rash and nausea.

Serious vaccination reactions are possible, but rare. Learn more at healthywa.wa.gov.au/adolescentimmunisation

Paracetamol can help reduce mild fever or pain and a cool damp cloth can help with pain at the injection site.

Seek medical advice or go to the local emergency department if your adolescent has any side effects that may be serious or unexpected such as swelling of the face or throat or difficulty breathing. You can also call *Healthdirect Australia* on 1800 022 222 for non-urgent queries. You can report concerns about any serious reactions after vaccination – visit healthywa.wa.gov.au/reportingsideeffects or call 6456 0208.



More information

For health advice or vaccination outside of school, speak with your GP, pharmacist, community health centre or Aboriginal Medical Service.

This document is available in various languages and can be made available in alternative formats on request.

For more information about adolescent vaccination or for help completing the intent form scan the QR code or go to healthywa.wa.gov.au/adolescentimmunisation

