

Information for parents - free dose of new pneumococcal vaccine

Australian children currently receive pneumococcal vaccine as part of their regular immunisations at two, four and six months of age.

On 1 July 2011, the pneumococcal vaccine for children was replaced with a newer vaccine. If your child was received their primary vaccinations (at 2, 4 and 6 months) before 1 July 2011, they would have received the older version of the pneumococcal vaccine.

Because of this, children aged 12 to 35 months (inclusive) can get a free dose of the new pneumococcal vaccine between 1 October 2011 and 30 September 2012, from your doctor or immunisation provider.

Why has the vaccine been changed?

The old pneumococcal vaccine for children (called Prevenar®) protected against seven types of the bacteria that most often caused pneumococcal disease in children.

In recent years, different types of the pneumococcal bacteria have become more common. The new vaccine (called Prevenar 13®) protects against the seven types of bacteria in the older Prevenar® vaccine, plus an additional six types of bacteria which are now more common in Australia.

What about children younger than 12 months?

From 1 July 2011 all children vaccinated against pneumococcal disease will have received at least one dose of Prevenar 13® and do not need a supplementary dose. During the period 1 October 2011 – 30 September 2012, children younger than 12 months who have not received at least one dose of Prevenar 13® will become eligible once they reach 12 months of age.

What about children older than 36 months?

Children aged 36 months or older have a lower risk of pneumococcal disease, as the rates of disease are less in this age group.

If your child is of Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander origin, or has a chronic medical condition, additional doses of pneumococcal vaccine may be required. Please discuss this with your doctor or immunisation provider.

Can my child have the vaccine at the same time as other vaccines?

Yes, Prevenar 13® vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines recommended for your child; there may be a small increased risk of fever or febrile convulsions if influenza and pneumococcal vaccines are given at the same time. If your child needs to have both of these vaccines at the same visit, please discuss this further with your doctor or immunisation provider.

Are there any possible side effects of the vaccine?

Common side effects of the vaccine are a mild temperature and pain at the injection site. Serious reactions to vaccinations are extremely rare. If your child has a reaction to any vaccine, please discuss this with your doctor or immunisation provider.

For more information:

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• visit www.health.qld.gov.au/immunisation• visit www.immunise.health.gov.au | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• talk to your doctor or immunisation provider• call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84). |
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