

Immunisation saves lives



Key facts

- Vaccination means getting a vaccine. It makes your body immune to some diseases. Vaccination is also known as immunisation.
- Older people can be more susceptible to some diseases, such as influenza and shingles.
- People aged 65 years and over can get free vaccine against influenza each year.
- The shingles vaccine is free for people aged 70 years.

Why is immunisation important?

Immunisation is a safe and effective way of protecting you and your community against serious diseases. Some vaccines are for older people, such as the vaccine against shingles. Shingles is a painful rash caused by the same virus that causes chickenpox. Complications from shingles may include severe pain, scarring, skin infections, loss of hearing or vision and pneumonia.

If you travel outside Australia (including to your country of birth), you might need vaccinations to protect you from getting sick. Your doctor (also called general practitioner or GP) can tell you what vaccinations are needed before your travel. This will depend on when and where you are going, your age, other medical conditions and your vaccination history.

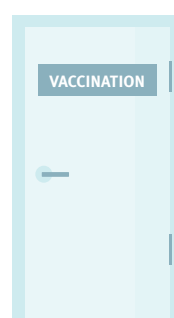
Speak to your doctor about your vaccinations to help protect you, your family and your community.

Immunisation schedule for Queensland

The immunisation schedule outlines which free vaccines are given at what age from birth to adulthood. The schedule is available at www.vaccinate.initiatives.qld.gov.au/schedule.

Are vaccines safe?

All vaccines available in Australia have been tested and are safe and effective. Like all medications, vaccines can cause some reactions. Common reactions to vaccines are generally mild and go away within a few days without medical treatment. Reactions include mild fever for a short time and soreness,



redness or swelling where the needle was given. Major side effects are extremely rare. The risk to your health from getting the disease is far more serious than the risk from vaccine side effects.

Where to get vaccinated and how much does it cost?

You can get vaccinated at your GP clinic. Talk to your doctor.

The shingles vaccine is free for all people aged 70 years. People aged 70 years and over can also have free pneumococcal vaccine.

People aged 65 years and over can get free influenza vaccine. Influenza vaccines need to be given every year before the influenza season starts as the virus can change every season.

While vaccines for these diseases are free for people in this age group, some doctors may charge a fee for the vaccination.

How can I access my immunisation records?

All vaccinations given to people in Australia are recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) by the doctor giving the vaccination.

To get a copy of your immunisation record (called an immunisation history statement) you can:

- ask your doctor to print a copy from AIR for you
- call AIR on 1800 653 809
- visit a local Medicare service centre.

Make sure you bring all your immunisation records, including those from outside Australia, to your medical appointments. The doctor or nurse can use these records to decide which vaccinations you need, and to record vaccinations you had outside Australia on the Australian Immunisation Register. This will help keep your immunisation records up-to-date.

More information

- Call 13 HEALTH (13 43 25 84) for health advice 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- Call the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National) on 131 450 if you need an interpreter.
- For more information about immunisation, visit www.qld.gov.au/health/conditions/immunisation or www.health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation
- For information in other languages, visit www.humanservices.gov.au/individuals/information-in-your-language or www.healthtranslations.vic.gov.au

