

10 August 2020

## **National Immunisation Advisory Committee**

### **Post immunisation advice related to COVID-19**

Given the risk of serious illness from vaccine preventable infections, the National Immunisation Advisory Committee strongly recommends that the National Immunisation Programmes should continue as usual.

#### **Post immunisation fever**

Fever commonly occurs after immunisation, and is a normal part of the inflammatory response.

Parents, carers and patients may be concerned that if a fever develops following immunisation, further investigation to rule out COVID-19 may be warranted.

The following outlines the expected time frame and characteristics of fever post vaccination when further investigation may not be needed.

Most vaccines used in the national immunisation programmes are non-live (inactivated). The live vaccines are rotavirus, measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) and live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV).

#### *Non-live (inactivated) vaccine febrile reactions*

Fever after non-live (inactivated) vaccines usually starts within 24 hours after vaccination. Fever is generally mild (<39°C) and usually resolves within 48-72 hours without treatment. This is a common, expected reaction.

Further investigation is not required if a fever <39°C develops within 72 hours of vaccination, unless COVID-19 is suspected\*.

Fever is more common when Meningococcal B (MenB) vaccine (Bexsero) is given with other vaccines at 2 and 4 months of age. Advice to give paracetamol after MenB vaccination remains unchanged.

#### *Live vaccine febrile reactions*

*Live attenuated influenza vaccine (LAIV):* Mild fever (<39°C), nasal congestion, rhinitis, malaise and decreased appetite are common reactions expected after LAIV. Symptoms associated with the administration of LAIV usually take about 24 hours to develop and usually resolve without treatment within 72 hours.

Further investigation is not required if the mild symptoms develop as above, within 72 hours after LAIV, unless COVID-19 is suspected\*.

*Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR) vaccine:* Mild fever (<39°C) is a common reaction and usually occurs 1-3 weeks after vaccination.

Because of the longer timeframe for the development of fever post MMR vaccination and the uncertainty of its relationship to the vaccine, standard COVID-19 investigation procedures should be followed.

#### **Note:**

Clinical judgement should be used based on the individual case. Parents, carers or patients should be advised that if they are concerned about their or their child's health, they should seek advice from their GP. This advice applies to recently vaccinated people of all ages.

\*For further information see <https://www.hpsc.ie/a-z/respiratory/coronavirus/novelcoronavirus/>