

Vaccines and Coeliac Disease

Paediatric Patient information

This leaflet provides information about vaccinations for children and young people with coeliac disease.

What vaccinations are advised for those with coeliac disease?

We recommend that all children with coeliac disease should get all their standard childhood vaccines (also known as immunisations or 'jabs'). The current recommended vaccinations can be checked on the NHS website;

www.nhs.uk/conditions/vaccinations/nhs-vaccinations-and-when-to-have-them/

If you think some vaccines have been missed you can check which vaccines have been given in your 'Red Book' (Childhood Personal Health Record). Your GP surgery and the school nursing service should also have records. Catch-up vaccines can be given at any age, contact your GP surgery to arrange this.

Advice on which vaccinations should be given at different ages, if some or all have been previously missed, can be found on the gov.uk website

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/vaccination-of-individuals-with-uncertain-or-incomplete-immunisation-status>

Why are vaccinations particularly recommended for those with coeliac disease?

Some people with coeliac disease may be at slightly higher risk of infections. This is much less of an issue in children. It is thought to be most likely to occur in those who do not keep to the gluten-free diet. A small proportion of adults with coeliac disease will have what is called 'functional hyposplenism' where the spleen, which is part of the immune system, does not work as well as it should increasing the chance of some serious bacterial infections.

Information about specific vaccines:

Pneumococcal vaccine

Being up to date with pneumococcal vaccines is recommended for people with coeliac disease. This protects against some types of pneumonia and meningitis.

Most children will already have had this as part of their routine immunisations as it was introduced into the UK schedule in 2006. If you have **not** had a full course of pneumococcal conjugate vaccine (PCV) ask your GP surgery to arrange a catch-up vaccination. A single dose of polysaccharide pneumococcal vaccine (P-23) can be given to those over 2 years old, including adults, who did not have PCV as a baby.

Meningitis Vaccines

Meningitis C, Meningitis B and Hib vaccines are part of the routine schedule for babies. If these have been missed please ask your GP to arrange catch-up immunisations.

Teenagers are strongly advised to get the **Men ACWY** immunisation (given in year 9 at school). This was introduced to the UK school programme in 2017. Those over the age of 14 who have not had this vaccine should contact their GP for catch-up.

Flu vaccine

Coeliac disease in itself does not greatly increase risk of flu (influenza) but it is recommended that children have the nasal flu vaccine when offered routinely.

Flu vaccine can also be considered in other age groups, particularly if they also have asthma or other chest conditions. Those under 2 years and over 18 years old will be offered the injectable flu vaccine rather than the nasal one.

Covid-19 Vaccines

Currently covid vaccines in the UK are being offered to people over the age of 5 years, starting with those at higher risk.

There is no strong evidence that people with coeliac disease are at higher risk of covid infections but adults with hyposplenism could be at increased risk so covid vaccination is encouraged.

Further Information

Coeliac UK has lots of information about vaccinations and coeliac disease on their website www.coeliac.org.uk.

The paediatric coeliac team or your GP can give further advice if needed.

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Please contact the Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.pals@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656/ 826319.