

Testing your immune system when you are having repeated infections

Department of Clinical Immunology

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Information for Patients

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Introduction

Patients who are suspected of having an immune system that is not working very well may have repeated infections, usually chest infections. These may need frequent courses of antibiotics.

Certain vaccines can be used to see how well the body's immune system is working. A healthy person should make antibodies that can be detected by a simple blood test taken 4 weeks after immunisation. If the readings are low, this shows the possibility of an immune system that is not working properly. This helps to make a diagnosis.

What are the vaccines we use?

There are 5 types of vaccines most often used for test immunisation:

Pneumovax II, Hib, Men ACWYvac, Tetanus Toxoid and Typhi Vi.

None of these are live vaccines. That means that the virus or bacteria has been killed. They are safe to use in patients attending the Immunology Clinic. If your doctor considers testing with 2 or more types, these are safe to be given at the same time, although each is given as a separate injection.

How is the vaccine administered?

The nurse will ask if you have any active infections or have a raised temperature before giving the vaccine. You need to tell the nurse or doctor if you have ever had any reactions after vaccinations in the past. The vaccine is given in the outer area at the top of the arm.

You will be given a form for a blood test. If you lose the blood form please contact your Immunology nurse for another copy.

Please go to either the hospital or your GP surgery for a blood test 4 weeks later to measure your antibody response to the vaccination.

**Health information and support is available at www.nhs.uk
or call 111 for non-emergency medical advice**

Visit www.leicestershospitals.nhs.uk for maps and information about visiting Leicester's Hospitals
To give feedback about this information sheet, contact InformationForPatients@uhl-tr.nhs.uk

What are the risks?

A vaccine, like any medicine, is able to cause serious problems, such as an allergic reaction. This risk is extremely small. Most people having a vaccination do not have any problems afterwards. Please note the following may occur:

Mild reactions

- Redness, warmth or swelling around the injection site
- A temperature over 37.5 degrees centigrade

Symptoms will usually start within a day and can last for up to 48 hours. Paracetamol may help to relieve the temperature and soreness.

These mild reactions are found after some vaccines but are rarely allergic reactions. You will not develop an infection because the vaccines used are not "live vaccines".

Severe reactions

- Swelling to the face and/or neck
- Difficulty in breathing and/or swelling

In the unlikely event of a severe reaction, seek urgent medical attention by **calling 999**

You were given the following vaccines today:

	Name of vaccine	Injection site	Date given
1			
2			

Contact details

If you have any questions please call the Clinical Immunology Nurse Specialists on 0116 258 6702

اگر آپ کو یہ معلومات کسی اور زبان میں درکار ہیں، تو براہ کرم مندرجہ ذیل نمبر پر ٹیلی فون کریں۔
على هذه المعلومات بلغةٍ أخرى، الرجاء الاتصال على رقم الهاتف الذي يظهر في الأسفل

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Aby uzyskać informacje w innym języku, proszę zadzwonić pod podany niżej numer telefonu

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