

Recommended vaccinations when receiving immunosuppressive therapy

GI Unit

Patient Information Leaflet

Introduction

This leaflet is for people who are receiving treatment known as immunosuppressive therapy for inflammatory bowel disease (IBD).

Immunosuppressive means that the treatment lowers the activity of your immune system. This decreases your ability to fight infections.

It is recommended that you have a number of vaccinations in order to:

- help your immune system fight infection and
- prevent yourself from becoming unwell due to common infections, such as flu or pneumonia (a serious chest infection)

What vaccinations are recommended?

- **Influenza (the flu jab) and swine flu vaccines.** These vaccines will protect you from the influenza (flu) and swine flu viruses. You should be vaccinated **every year**.
- **Pneumococcal vaccine.** Pneumococcal infections are caused by bacteria called Streptococcus pneumonia. They can lead to pneumonia, septicaemia (a kind of blood poisoning) and meningitis. This vaccine will protect you from this type of infection. You should be vaccinated **every three to five years**. Your GP will advise you about this.
- **Human papilloma virus (HPV) vaccine.** This vaccine decreases the risk of HPV infection which can cause cervical cancer. For people having immunosuppressive therapy, it is recommended for men and women from age 13 to 26, in those who have not previously been vaccinated. **Only one course** of vaccination is needed.

Ask your GP for advice about whether you have been vaccinated.

What vaccinations I should avoid?

You should **avoid live vaccinations** as they could be harmful to you. These include any of the following vaccines:

- BCG (for tuberculosis – TB)
- MMR (measles, mumps and rubella)
- Oral polio (you take this by mouth)
- Live typhoid
- Varicella (chickenpox), shingles
- Yellow fever

What other precautions should I take?

Always let any healthcare professional know what medications you are taking before having any vaccinations.

If you are a woman aged between 25 to 64 years, you will be invited to have routine cervical screening every three to five years. It is highly recommended that you attend this routine cervical screening.

Can I find out more?

If you have any concerns or questions, or you are unsure about the information in this booklet, you can talk to your IBD specialist nurse, GP, hospital consultant or pharmacist.

IBD specialist nurses contact information

01384 456111 ext. 2440 (9am to 5pm, Monday to Friday)

Russells Hall Hospital switchboard number: 01384 456111

This leaflet can be downloaded or printed from:

<http://dudleygroup.nhs.uk/services-and-wards/gastroenterology/>

If you have any feedback on this patient information leaflet, please email patient.information@dgh.nhs.uk

This leaflet can be made available in large print, audio version and in other languages, please call 0800 073 0510.

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Ulotka dostępna jest również w dużym druku, wersji audio lub w innym języku. W tym celu zadzwoń pod numer 0800 073 0510.

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