

# Immunisation made easy.

2018 school immunisation program



## In this information booklet, you will find:

- information on the two vaccines being offered and the diseases that they prevent;
- information on how your privacy is protected;
- advice on preparing your child before vaccination;
- post vaccination information;
- how to return your child's completed consent form;
- details on where to find more information on immunisation.

## Parent/Legal Guardian: to have your child vaccinated please:

- Read this information and discuss with your Child. If you have any questions contact Gold Coast Immunisation Team on 1800 940 750 or speak with your GP, or call or 13HEALTH (13432584)
- Complete the consent form included
- Make sure you choose YES or NO for each vaccine and sign alongside your choice
- Include the date below signature boxes
- Return the consent form as soon as possible
- Access to the consent form is available at [www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC)

## Information for parents/legal guardians

As part of Queensland Health's School Immunisation Program, every Year 7 student will be offered two free vaccinations as recommended in the National Immunisation Program:

### 1. Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine

A vaccine against Human Papillomavirus (HPV). This virus has been identified as important in a range of cancers and other conditions in both males and females. As well as causing many genital cancers, the virus is a major cause of mouth and throat cancers which are on the increase in recent years. It can also cause tumours in the air passages to the lungs.

While there are a lot of social media stories about the risks of HPV vaccine, we have been using this vaccine for over a decade. Over 9 million doses of this vaccine have been given in Australia and over 200 million doses worldwide. No serious side effects have been seen with rigorous monitoring over this time.

#### What is HPV?

- It is a very common infectious disease with most people (over 80%) experiencing a HPV infection at some time in their lives.
- Most HPV infections do not cause any symptoms and people usually do not know they have the infection.

- Most people clear the infection but 10-20% continue to have the virus in their body. This can cause a range of cancers and other conditions in later life.

#### What is Human Papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine?

- The HPV vaccine is not a new vaccine.
- It protects both boys and girls against 9 types of HPV related cancers and diseases by preventing infection.
- Two single doses of the vaccine are given at 0 and (at least) 6 months. Previously 3 doses of HPV vaccine was given. Studies have shown that 2 doses is as effective for adolescents aged less than 15.

#### What are the benefits of receiving HPV vaccine?

- There is currently no treatment for HPV
- Both boys and girls benefit from the vaccine's protection.
- The vaccine provides girls with the best protection against cervical cancer. A renewed National Cervical Screening Program commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> Dec 2017 ([www.cancerscreening.gov.au/internet/screening/publishing.nsf/content/cervical-screening-1](http://www.cancerscreening.gov.au/internet/screening/publishing.nsf/content/cervical-screening-1)).
- It is important for boys to have the vaccine as one third of all HPV cancers occur in males.

#### Immunocompromised individuals

Immunocompromised children (with major medical conditions listed below) require three doses of Gardasil®9 given at 0, 2 and 6 months to attain adequate protection and may not be able to be vaccinated in the School Immunisation Program. In these instances please consult your doctor to discuss HPV vaccination for your child.

- These conditions include primary or secondary immunodeficiencies; HIV infection; malignancy; organ transplantation; autoimmune disease; or significant immunosuppressive therapy (excluding asplenia or hyposplenia).

### 2. Diphtheria, Tetanus and Pertussis (whooping cough) Vaccine(dTpa)

#### What are diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis?

##### Diphtheria:

- is caused by bacteria that infect the mouth, throat and nose and results in an extremely sore throat and breathing difficulties
- can produce nerve paralysis and heart failure
- about one in 15 people infected with diphtheria will die.

##### Tetanus:

- occurs when wounds are infected by bacteria present in the soil
- causes painful muscle spasms, convulsions and lockjaw
- in Australia, about three percent of people who develop tetanus will die
- in 2015 there were three cases of tetanus in Queensland.

### **Pertussis (whooping cough):**

- is a highly contagious respiratory disease resulting in a severe cough that may last for months
- infected people may gasp for air causing a 'whooping' sound and they may also have severe coughing spasms followed by gagging or vomiting
- infections in adolescents and adults is common leading to prolonged illness (the 100 day cough disease). Infected persons can also pass the disease on to vulnerable children
- pertussis is highly contagious and can be deadly for newborn babies too young to be vaccinated. Six Queensland babies died of whooping cough between 2000 and 2003
- complications can include convulsions, pneumonia, coma, inflammation of the brain, permanent brain damage and long-term lung damage
- vaccines given against pertussis in childhood or having had whooping cough disease does not provide lifelong protection.

### **What is diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (dTpa) vaccine?**

- the dTpa vaccine is a booster three in one vaccine that protects against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis
- one single dose is given to all boys and girls at this age.

### **Why are students vaccinated at this age?**

These vaccines are being provided in year 7 as adolescents receiving vaccines before age 14 develop a stronger immune response that those receiving vaccines later in adolescence due to changes in the immune system after this age.

- These diseases are serious, can be life-threatening, and can occur during adolescence and adulthood.
- Even if your child has been vaccinated against diphtheria and tetanus (Td), they should still be vaccinated with dTpa vaccine to provide protection against whooping cough as well.
- There is no minimum waiting period between previously administered tetanus/diphtheria (Td) vaccines and dTpa.

### **Can these vaccines have side effects?**

Like all medications, vaccines may have side effects but these are usually mild and temporary and do not lead to any long term problems. If a reaction is severe or persistent, or if you are worried, contact your doctor or hospital as soon as possible.

Possible common side effects of all vaccines may include:

- fever, mild headache, feeling unwell and redness, pain or swelling at the injection site
- serious side effects, such as severe allergic reaction, are extremely rare
- other, less common side effects are: chills, diarrhoea, nausea, body aches, decreased energy, and sore or swollen joints.

The current dTpa vaccine is different from the vaccine offered when your child was of preschool age and adverse reactions are less common.



School immunisation clinics are provided by a team of specially trained registered nurses. We are working closely with schools to ensure the program reaches all parents/legal guardians.

### **Consent of a parent/legal guardian is needed before any student can be vaccinated**

Only students with a completed and signed consent form will be vaccinated. After both the parent/guardian and student have read this information sheet, please complete and sign the consent form in black pen and indicate your consent or decline to the vaccinations being offered.

Prior to vaccination the nurse will ask your child if they feel unwell and check that the contact details provided on the consent form are all up to date.

Your child will be provided with a vaccination record to take home.

### **What do I need to do if I want to change consent for my child?**

Alterations can be made to your child's consent to vaccination as follows:

- up to two business days before immunisation takes place at the school you will need to make a written request via email to Gold Coast Public Health Unit at **immuniseGC@health.qld.gov.au**
- within two business days of immunisation, you will need to send a signed written request of changes with your child to take to the school immunisation team or alternatively you need to meet in person with the school immunisation team to confirm that changes to your child's consent have been received.

### **What can I do if my child can't be vaccinated at school or misses a dose at the school clinic?**

For a vaccine to be effective, all doses must be received. If doses are missed, your child may not be fully protected.

- You can take your child to a free Gold Coast Immunisation Clinic. No appointment required. Clinic dates/times can be found at: **www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC**
- take your child to your doctor. The vaccine will be free; however you may be charged a consultation fee. When making an appointment, advise reception what vaccines are required so they can be ordered.

## What can I do to help my child get ready for vaccination?

Children are often worried about getting needles. To help make this easier for your child it is important to explain what will happen and when.

### Help them work out ways to cope better

1. Distraction – thinking about something else is a good way to cope with something that might hurt. Help them to come up with a list of things they can do to distract themselves while waiting. For example, they could:
  - think of a favourite memory;
  - talk with a friend;
  - listen to music;
  - read a book.
2. Never say, “It won’t hurt”.
3. Be honest. Tell them what they can really expect. “You might feel a small pinch like an ‘ant bite’ and some pressure”.
4. Be calm and matter of fact yourself. This is an important part of growing up.
5. Don’t joke or tease.
6. Be encouraging and supportive.
7. Make sure your child has breakfast on the day of vaccination.

### Please note on the consent form if your child:

- is highly anxious about getting an injection;
- has previously fainted following vaccination;
- has special needs or a medical condition.

### What do I need to do for my child after vaccination?

1. For soreness, redness, itching, swelling or burning at the injection site, apply a cold compress to ease discomfort.
2. If fever or pain is present, paracetamol can be given as per product directions. Paracetamol should not be given for more than 48 hours without seeking medical advice.
3. If you are worried about your child’s condition after vaccination, seek medical advice from your doctor or vaccine provider as soon as possible or go directly to a hospital.



For more information, and to find out about free public immunisation clinics scan the QR code or visit:  
[www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC)

A consent form must be returned for all students to ensure that all parents/legal guardians have received the offer of this service.

### The consent form can be completed:

- online at [www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC](http://www.health.qld.gov.au/immuniseGC)
- hard copy consent forms can be requested from the Gold Coast Public Health Immunisation Team on **1800 940 750** or [immuniseGC@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:immuniseGC@health.qld.gov.au)

### If you are completing a hard copy form please:

- use black or blue pen only
- return completed consent forms as soon as possible by: Reply paid envelope or scan and email to [immuniseGCform@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:immuniseGCform@health.qld.gov.au).

**Only complete and submit one form.**

## Privacy and accessing records

The *Information Privacy Act 2009* sets out the rules for collection and handling of personal information contained in the School Immunisation Program consent form. As part of participation in the School Immunisation Program, Queensland Health collects details such as the student’s name, contact information and relevant health information. We also need to collect contact details for the parent or legal guardian of the student. This information is needed to correctly deliver vaccinations and to record vaccination details on Queensland Health’s immunisation database (Vaccination Information and Vaccination Administration System). Authorised Queensland Health staff and Vaccine Service Providers (currently Smartvax) registered with Queensland Health may access your information for the purpose of clinical follow up or disease prevention, control and monitoring. Your information will not be accessed by or given to any other person or organisation without your permission unless permitted or required by law.

The Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) previously known as the Australian Childhood Immunisation Register was established in 1996 and is a national register of vaccinations of people who live in Australia. The immunisation record will be sent to and kept by the AIR, which is run by the Department of Human Services and the National Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccination Program Register which is run by the Victorian Cytology Service Incorporated (VCS Inc.).

For information about how the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service protects your personal information, or to learn about your right to access your own personal information, see the Gold Coast Hospital and Health Service’s Privacy Plan<sup>1</sup>.

You can access records of immunisations received through the School Immunisation Program by filling in a Vaccination History Request<sup>2</sup> online.

You can obtain a record of your child’s immunisation history from AIR through the Department of Human Services.<sup>3</sup> You will need to register for online services<sup>4</sup>, and then you will be able to request a history statement. Alternatively, you can call AIR on 1800 653 809 and request that a statement is sent to you.



If you have any further questions about the School Immunisation Program contact the Gold Coast Public Health Immunisation team:

t: 1800 940 750

e: [immuniseGC@health.qld.gov.au](mailto:immuniseGC@health.qld.gov.au)