



## Your Clinic Visit

**Please allow a few minutes to complete your clinic details and at least 30 minutes for your time with the doctor. You will need to bring the following with you:**

- Past vaccination records
- Details of your trip itinerary
- Names of any medications you take regularly or intermittently

If you have an international vaccination record book, please bring it with you. You may need to contact your doctor to ask for a written vaccination record. Individuals who have spent time in the services (army, navy and air force) are usually well vaccinated and their records kept by the base. It is often well worthwhile seeking out the details.

*If you were born after 1966 ask your parents about childhood illnesses such as measles, mumps and chickenpox. This may give us an idea on your current immunity. Check whether you have had all the standard immunizations offered at school or at the local council. You may have to delve a bit but having a complete history IS important.*

Globe Medical will provide you with an official World Health Organisation yellow fever vaccination book. You may have to carry it with you if traveling in Africa or South America.

While Globe Medical will retain an electronic record of immunizations on file the yellow book is also important as a permanent record.

### **Important considerations before vaccination.**

Prior to receiving any vaccination it is important to make the medical staff aware of any issues.

- Do you have any allergies eg eggs, antibiotics, mercury etc
- Are you pregnant
- Have you been unwell in the last 48 to 72hrs
- Do you suffer from any medical problems which affect immunity eg leukaemia, HIV etc
- Are you on any medications which might cause immunosuppression eg prednisolone
- Have you a history of allergy to bees
- Do you suffer from any bleeding disorders

### **Vaccination side effects.**

Vaccines for travel are only recommended where the risk of the disease outweighs any potential side effects. Most vaccines are well tolerated with only a few minor side effects. Rarely serious side effects do occur and need to be dealt with quickly. Apart from BCG (Tuberculosis), modern vaccines do not leave scars. On the day of vaccination you should be able to go about your normal daily routine however strenuous exercise should be avoided after having a live vaccine eg MMR, Yellow Fever, Chickenpox or oral Polio. If you are unsure ask the doctor.

Despite popular belief you can still drink alcohol. The myth probably originated from the army. After being given a number of vaccines at one time army recruits were often given time off to recuperate. This usually meant time at the local pub and consequent bad behaviour. To get around the problem they were advised it would affect the vaccination for a couple of days.



## **SERIOUS SIDE EFFECTS (ANAPHYLAXIS)**

Serious reactions are rare but can be life threatening. It is important to be aware of the symptoms and seek medical attention as soon as possible. Any delay can have serious consequences. The following symptoms should be taken seriously:

- Swelling or itching of the lips
- Facial swelling or redness
- Unexplained coughing or wheezing
- Any difficulty in breathing
- Dizziness or feeling faint in the upright position
- Rapidly developing rash

Symptoms usually develop within minutes of vaccination, (hence the need to wait in the clinic after receiving certain vaccines eg Yellow Fever). Occasionally allergic symptoms occur up to 10 days later (Japanese Encephalitis). If you develop one or more of the above symptoms within 10 days, immediately call your doctor or go to the nearest casualty department or well equipped medical centre. Persons with allergies to eggs cannot have vaccines against yellow fever or influenza. It is important to describe to the doctor what you mean by "allergy to eggs". An allergy to penicillin or sulfa does not prevent you from being vaccinated.

## **Fainting**

Fainting is common. A past history should be noted when completing the clinic form. In most instances it can be prevented by lying down. Painful injections such as Tetanus/ Diphtheria are more likely to precipitate a faint.

If you feel light headed, sweaty or nauseated at any time during your clinic visit it is important to let the staff know. It is possible to faint just hearing about a disease or discussing an injection!

## **Sore, red arm**

A few vaccines can cause a sore arm. This is usually minor and will last only for a few days. Occasionally a deep lump can be felt at the site of the injection and will persist for a few weeks before disappearing. If you have red, hot or swollen arm you should report it to the clinic or perhaps have it checked. An ice pack to the affected area may help to ease the discomfort and Paracetamol for pain can be taken. Occasionally itching or redness is seen with the rabies vaccine.

## **Fevers and being "unwell"**

Live vaccines such as Yellow fever, MMR and chickenpox may cause a slight fever, headache, tiredness, and muscle aches starting 3-10 days after vaccination. MMR can also cause a rash. Most of the new 'dead' vaccines do not cause fevers although the meningitis vaccine is well known to cause flu-like symptoms. It is important to note the flu vaccine is a 'killed' vaccine and cannot cause the flu. If you develop a fever or become unwell after vaccination, call the doctor who gave you the vaccines.

## **Will vaccination affect my immune system?**

There is no evidence that this common belief is true. Vaccinations are only recommended when the risk of the disease is far greater than that of the vaccine.

## **Should I delay being vaccinated if I get sick?**

A runny nose, cough or cold is not a reason to delay vaccination. It may be a good idea if you are sick enough to be in bed