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Hib/MenC vaccine at 12-13 months



This leaflet tells you all about the Hib/MenC vaccine that protects against two diseases caused by *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) and Meningococcal C (MenC) infections.



Meningococcal C

MenC (meningococcal group C) bacteria can cause meningitis (an infection of the lining of the brain) and septicaemia (blood poisoning). Meningitis and septicaemia are both very serious, and can cause permanent disability and death if not treated quickly. The MenC vaccine protects against one of the causes, meningococcal C infection. Since the MenC vaccine was introduced in 1999 there has been a more than 95% decrease in cases of disease caused by meningococcal group C. The meningococcal bacteria are carried in the back of the throat and are spread by prolonged close contact. Ways the bacteria can spread include sneezing, coughing, kissing and sharing personal possessions.

Hib

Hib (*Haemophilus influenzae* type b) disease is an infection caused by bacteria. It can lead to a number of serious illnesses such as blood poisoning (septicaemia), lung

infection (pneumonia) and meningitis (an infection of the lining of the brain). The illnesses caused by Hib can kill if not treated quickly. Before the Hib vaccine was introduced, there were about 800 cases of Hib in young children every year in the UK. Since it was introduced the number of children under five years of age with Hib has fallen by 99%. The bacteria can be spread in the air from other people's coughs and sneezes. The Hib vaccine only protects against the type of meningitis caused by *Haemophilus influenzae* type b bacteria, it does not protect against any other type of meningitis so you still need to know the signs and symptoms;

Babies and Toddlers



Fever, cold hands and feet



Refusing food and vomiting



Fretful, dislike being handled



Drowsy, floppy, unresponsive



Rapid breathing or grunting



Pale, blotchy skin
Spots/rash
See Glass Test



Unusual cry, moaning



Tense, bulging fontanelle (soft spot)



Stiff neck, dislike bright lights



Convulsions/seizures

Children and Adults



Fever, cold hands and feet



Vomiting



Drowsy, difficult to wake



Confusion and irritability



Severe muscle pain



Pale, blotchy skin
Spots/rash
See Glass Test



Severe headache



Stiff neck



Dislike bright lights



Convulsions/
seizures

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What should I do if I suspect meningitis?

If one or more of the symptoms described above develops, get medical help urgently. If you can't get in touch with your doctor, or are still worried after getting advice, trust your instincts and attend the emergency department of your nearest hospital.

The 'glass' test

Press the side of a drinking glass firmly against the rash so you can see if the rash fades and loses colour under pressure. If it doesn't change colour and your child is unwell, contact your doctor immediately.



When is the Hib/MenC vaccine offered?

Children are offered this vaccine between the ages of 12-13 months.

How will I know when immunisations are due?

Children are sent an appointment to attend for their routine Hib/MenC vaccine at the appropriate age. Most surgeries and health centres run special immunisation or baby clinics.

What happens at the appointment?

The nurse or doctor will explain about the immunisations and answer your questions. Children over 12 months of age are usually given injections in the upper arm.

Can the vaccine be given if unwell on the day the immunisation is due?

If a child has a minor illness without a fever, such as a cold, they should have their immunisations as normal. If a child is ill with a fever on the day the immunisation is due, delay the immunisations until recovered.



Are there any other reasons why the vaccine should not be given?

There are very few reasons why the Hib/MenC vaccine cannot be given. This vaccine should not be given to anyone who has had a severe (life threatening) reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine or any ingredient in the vaccine.

If your child:

- has a bleeding disorder (for example haemophilia, in which the child's blood does not clot properly), or
- has had a fit not associated with fever

Speak to your doctor, practice nurse or health visitor before your child has any immunisation.

What if I miss the appointment?

You should cancel an appointment in advance if you can't make it. If you do miss the appointment or have to delay the immunisation, make a new appointment as soon as possible. In most cases the immunisations can still be given.

Remember, it's important to catch up on most missed immunisations. If your child has missed an immunisation and is older than the recommended age, talk to your GP, practice nurse or health visitor.

Does the vaccine have any side effects?

Millions of doses of the vaccine have been used and it has a very good safety record. Children can sometimes get a sore leg or arm where the injection was given. Some may develop a small lump where the needle was put in, this is normal and may last some weeks. It does not need any treatment. They may also get a raised temperature (fever) over 37.5°C, seem unsettled and may not want to eat much. If your child has a raised temperature and appears unwell they can be given paracetamol liquid. Read the instructions on the bottle carefully and give your child the correct strength and dose for their age.

If you are worried about your child after the immunisation you should speak to your health visitor, doctor or practice nurse or call NHS Direct Wales on 0845 4647 or visit

www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/

Members of the public can report suspected side effects of vaccines and medicines through the Yellow Card scheme. This can be done by visiting **www.yellowcard.gov.uk** or by calling the Yellow Card hotline on **0808 100 3352** (available Monday to Friday, 10.00 – 14.00).

Where can I get more information?

You can find out more about the vaccines used including vaccine contents and potential side effects at www.medicines.org.uk/emc/

by entering the name of the vaccine in the search box and looking at the patient information leaflet (PIL).

The vaccine currently used is Menitorix®.



The routine immunisation schedule that shows you which immunisations are offered in Wales is available from

www.publichealthwales.org/routine-immunisation-schedule-wales

If you have any questions or want more information, talk to your doctor or nurse or call NHS Direct Wales on 0845 4647 or visit

www.nhsdirect.wales.nhs.uk/



To order more copies of this leaflet, email:

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