

Immunisation: Protect yourself and your family

Immunisation is a safe and effective way to protect yourself and your family from harmful, contagious diseases that may cause ongoing health issues.

When you are immunised, you are helping to protect the whole community. Your immunity helps to protect people who have a higher risk of getting the disease, such as those too young or too sick to be vaccinated.

Some vaccinations can provide lifelong protection, while others need regular doses to be effective.

Vaccinations that require more frequent doses for adults include:

- Influenza
- Pertussis
- Shingles (herpes zoster)
- Pneumococcal.

Ask your GP, 'Are my vaccinations up to date?'



Further Information:

Department of Health website:

<https://health.gov.au/health-topics>

National Immunisation Hotline: 1800 671 811

Australian Commission on Safety and Quality in Health Care website:

www.safetyandquality.gov.au

World Health Organisation (WHO) website:

www.who.int/health-topics

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) website:

www.cdc.gov

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Townsville
Hospital
and Health
Service

Infection Prevention and YOU!

A guide for patients and visitors of the
Townsville Hospital and Health Service



*Infection Prevention
and Control*



Queensland
Government



Get smart about antibiotics

Did you know, antibiotics are only effective against bacteria?

Viruses can't be treated with antibiotics.

Antibiotic resistance is one of the biggest global threats to public health. When bacteria develops resistance to antibiotics, it means certain antibiotics are no longer effective to treat some infections.

Misuse of antibiotics is one of the main causes of antibiotic resistance.

What can I do?

- Only take antibiotics prescribed by your doctor
- Know what antibiotics you're taking and the potential side effects
- Always complete the full course of prescribed antibiotics (don't stop taking them when you start feeling better)
- Never share or use leftover antibiotics (always discard unused medication)
- Prevent infections by regularly washing hands, avoiding close contact with sick people and keeping vaccinations up to date.

Remember, not all infections can be treated with antibiotics!

Know the signs and symptoms of infection

Medical devices, surgical sites and new or existing wounds can introduce infections into your body if not managed properly.

Signs and symptoms of infection may include:

- Pain, redness and/or swelling from a device site or wound
- Green, cloudy or smelly discharge from a device site or wound
- Feeling feverish, hot/cold/shivery, or generally unwell.

What can I do?

- Ask your doctor/nurse, "Do I still need this medical device?"
- Avoid touching the device or wound as much as possible
- Ensure everyone washes their hands before touching the device or wound
- Follow advice for care of your dressings (alert your nurse if dressing is wet, loose or has fallen off)
- Practice good personal hygiene
- Alert your doctor/nurse if you notice any symptoms of infection.

Don't be afraid to ask, 'have you washed your hands?'



Watch out for diarrhoea

Diarrhoea can be caused by an infection in the gut from a bacteria, virus or parasite. Some medications, including antibiotics, can disturb normal gut bacteria (flora) and cause infectious diarrhoea (C.diff).

Diarrhoeal infections can be spread through person-to-person contact, touching contaminated surfaces or consuming contaminated food or water.

Signs and symptoms may include:

- Passing three or more loose/liquid stools per day (24-hour period)
- Nausea, vomiting and stomach cramps
- Fever and general aches/pains.

Symptoms generally last 12-60 hours, however C.diff can last for many weeks.

What can I do?

- Tell your doctor/nurse if you have diarrhoea while in hospital
- Wash hands with soap and water
 - After using the toilet
 - After touching potentially contaminated surfaces
 - Before preparing food.
- Encourage family/close contacts to wash hands
- Avoid visitors until 48 hours after symptoms have gone
- Avoid preparing food for others until at least 48 hours after symptoms have gone.