

## POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO FAQ FROM – **YEAR 7 PARENTS/GUARDIANS** – A SCHOOL GUIDE

1. **My child had diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccine when they were aged 4, will he/she need the one offered at school?** “Yes, this is a booster dose that all students now need to receive in Year 7.”
2. **Human Papillomavirus Vaccine (HPV) is given to boys as well as girls, why?** “The vaccine used in Australia, called Gardasil 9® is very effective in reducing cervical cancers in women and genital warts in both men & women caused by an infection with Human Papillomavirus. This virus also causes cancers in other parts of the body, including the vulva, vagina, penis and anus. As the infection is spread through sexual contact, to reduce the effect of these diseases amongst males & females during adulthood, the Federal Government provides free *Gardasil 9®* vaccine to both boys and girls. The vaccine works best if given prior to sexual activity. ***Gardasil 9® is recommended as a 2-dose course vaccine for 12 – 13 year olds or Year 7 students. If vaccination is delayed till after the 15<sup>th</sup> birthday a 3-dose course is required.***”
3. **I’ve heard that the HPV vaccine causes bad side effects – some students faint, I’m worried about these side-effects on my child. How can they be prevented?** “HPV vaccine is generally well tolerated. Common side effects are mild and usually involve pain, swelling and redness at the injection site. Serious side effects are extremely rare. Fainting can occur after receiving any injection, and a fear response to a situation; this response may increase within the school environment due to the response of friends. The nurses are very experienced in dealing with this situation and all students are observed for a short time following vaccination. You can assist your child by ensuring they have a good breakfast before leaving home and provide them with ample food and water to consume during the day.”
4. **My child is very nervous about having needles and the potential pain, I want him/her to use an Emla® patch or numbing cream, is that OK?** “Sure, if you ask your child to bring the patches into school on the morning of the clinic, school staff will organise for the nurses to put the patches on for your child 20 to 30 minutes before your child gets vaccinated. This way, the patches will be in the correct position and the nurses will be able to slot your child in at the correct time.”
5. **Will I know what vaccines my child has received?** “Yes, all students are provided a Record of Vaccination card with all vaccines given on that day, information includes the date, time, and batch number of each vaccine given. Please retain this document for future reference. Records will be uploaded to the Australian Immunisation Register (AIR) to provide a complete immunisation history for you child.”
6. **With COVID-19 Pandemic is it safe for my child to be vaccinated at school?** “All nurses are employed by NSW Health and follow additional measures to reduce the likelihood of COVID-19 transmission, such as increased hand hygiene, screening, environmental cleaning & physical distancing as much as possible, face masks may also be worn, depending on risk level.”
7. **Where can I find more information about vaccines in the School Vaccination Program?**

**NSW Ministry of Health website:** <http://www.health.nsw.gov.au/immunisation>

**National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance [NCIRS] website:**

<http://www.ncirs.edu.au/provider-resources/ncirs-fact-sheets/>

**Australian Government Department of Health website:** <https://www.health.gov.au/resources/videos/getting-your-hpv-dtpa-vaccinations-at-school-what-to-expect>

**Cancer Council Victoria website:** <http://www.hpvvaccine.org.au>

**Parramatta Public Health Unit:** (02) 9840 3603

## POSSIBLE ANSWERS TO FAQ FROM – YEAR 7 STUDENTS – A SCHOOL GUIDE

- 1. Does it hurt/ what does it feel like?** This is the most asked question and probably the hardest to answer! Year 7 students have *not* received any vaccines within a school program before, therefore we need to provide students with a direct & honest answer on the sensations to be expected without lying, catastrophising or withholding information:  
**Suggestions:** “It may feel like a little pinch; a sting; a tingle, or like a mozzie bite, but the more relaxed you are the less you may feel” or “Everyone feels things differently, tell me after what you think.”  
The student may find it *unhelpful* if you use comments like “It’ll be alright” or “I know it’s hard” or “I’m sorry you have to go through this” or “You’re being a baby.”
- 2. What will happen?** “Before entering the vaccination clinic a nurse will ask you some questions about your health, you’ll also need to sanitise your hands and you may find the nurses wearing face masks. You will then be called across to your vaccination nurse, who will ask you some more questions about you and your health. Your nurse will explain what to expect and provide you with tips on how to distract yourself whilst getting your vaccine. If you follow the nurse’s directions, the vaccine will only take a few seconds to be given. After vaccination the nurse will complete your Record of Vaccination card and provide you with further information. You will be back with your classmates within 5 minutes.”
- 3. I’m fasting, can I take this injection?** “If you are fasting for religious purposes it is fine for you to be vaccinated. But please be aware that if you are feeling unwell after the vaccination you may be required to break your fast to drink water and recover.”
- 4. What do I do if I’m not at school next visit?** “That’s OK; catch-up vaccinations are available at school into Year 8.”
- 5. Why do I get asked if I’m pregnant? (Girl’s only!)** “Although this may seem a very silly question, especially as you are only in Year 7, please don’t be alarmed! This question is always asked to females before a vaccine is given, certain vaccines should be avoided during pregnancy as it may affect the developing baby.”
- 6. Why does everyone tell me to eat and drink well during the day?** “Sometimes if you are feeling particularly fearful of having an injection you produce a chemical in your body called adrenaline, this can give you a feeling of wanting to run away and/or having butterflies in your stomach. Eating and drinking well both before and after vaccination makes you feel better, faster.”
- 7. I’m scared of having a needle, what should I do?** “Make sure you have a good breakfast on the morning of the clinic. Please come and see me at the beginning of the day and I will slot you in early to see the nurses.”
- 8. I forgot to bring my consent form in, what should I do?** “Please return your signed consent form to school tomorrow and it’ll be kept at school ready for the next clinic. There is no need for you to visit your local doctor.”
- 9. What if I feel unwell after vaccinations?** “Just let the nurses know and they will look after you”

**Need more information about what to expect on the day?** Watch this video: -

<https://www.health.gov.au/resources/videos/getting-your-hpv-dtpa-vaccinations-at-school-what-to-expect>