

Children's Arthritis Treatment Information

Guidelines on Childhood Diseases and Vaccinations

Notes for parents with children on immuno suppressive drugs – treatment information

At different stages in the first 18 years of life your child will be vaccinated. Vaccines fall into two groups:

1. **Live Vaccine** – this is a weakened preparation of live virus or bacteria.
2. **Inactivated Vaccine** – this is a preparation of extracts of the killed virus or bacteria.

Live Vaccines

Children with juvenile arthritis who are being treated with medication that suppresses the immune system, like Methotrexate, should not be given live vaccines because there is a chance that they can develop a significant infection of the virus or bacteria.

A live vaccination can be given before starting an immunosuppressive drug. These drugs can be introduced one month after vaccination.

Here is a list of live vaccines and the age at which children usually receive them:

2 months	Polio drops (oral). 3 doses are given at intervals of 4 weeks. Note – an inactivated vaccine is available.	Inactivated Vaccines Inactivated vaccines may not give one hundred per cent cover to patients on immunosuppressive drugs, but it is recommended that children should still receive these vaccines.
Pre-School	Measles/Mumps and Rubella (German Measles) Polio	
10-14 years	BCG (tuberculosis)	
13-18 years	Polio	

Here is a list of inactivated vaccines and the age at which children usually receive them:

2 months	Meningitis C DTP (diphtheria/pertussis/tetanus) HIB (haemophilus influenza type b). These vaccines are repeated at 3 and 4 months.
Pre-School	DT (diphtheria/tetanus)
13-18 years	Td low dose (diphtheria/tetanus)

Other inactivated vaccines administered to those at risk:

Rheumatology department Patient Information

Hepatitis B

Please check with your doctor if travelling overseas to areas of health risk where other vaccinations are recommended.

Chicken Pox

In this area children are not vaccinated against this common childhood disease. If your child develops chicken pox while on an immunosuppressive drug, there is a slight risk that they may get a severe infection. Medication can be given to help the symptoms, therefore you should seek the advice of your GP.

Before starting on immunosuppressive drugs like Methotrexate your child will be offered a blood test to indicate whether they already have immunity to chicken pox.

Telephone Advice line

We do offer telephone advice line service, Monday to Thursday. The helpline is to provide contact and advice for patients between hospital appointments. The helpline is **not** an emergency service and at times messages will need to be left on an answerphone. If the problem is urgent, please see your GP or go to the Accident and Emergency Department.

Contact Details

If you have any further questions or need advice about your treatment phone the Rheumatology Advice line on

01202 442849.

www.poole.nhs.uk/our_services/rheumatology.asp

For further health-related information, please contact:

The Health Information & Resource Centre

Poole Hospital NHS Foundation Trust

Longfleet Road

Poole

BH15 2JB

Telephone: (01202) 448003

Rheumatology Practitioners

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We can supply this information in larger print, on audiotape, or have it translated for you. A member of staff will be happy to discuss this with you. Please call PALS on 01202 448499 or the Health Information Centre on 01202 448003 for further advice