Vaccination for people who are immunocompromised

People who are immunocompromised have an increased risk of disease. They may need extra doses of some vaccines to optimise protection. Some vaccines are contraindicated in these people.

Immunosuppression can be caused by:

- autoimmune conditions
- therapy such as corticosteroids or DMARDs
- cancer and cancer therapy
- HIV
- solid organ transplant or haematopoietic stem cell transplant
- functional or anatomical asplenia

Give

- Influenza
- Pneumococcal
- Other inactivated vaccines as required

Avoid live vaccines

DO NOT give live vaccines to people who are severely immunocompromised.

People who are less severely immunocompromised may be able to receive live vaccines, depending on their level of immunocompromise:

- MMR
- MMRV
- Rotavirus
- Zoster
- Yellow fever

DO NOT give:

- BCG
- Oral typhoid

Household contacts should be fully vaccinated to protect the person who is immunocompromised. Household contacts can safely receive live vaccines.

If unsure about whether to vaccinate, check with the person’s treating physician or an immunisation specialist.

See the Australian Immunisation Handbook for more details.