Catch-up vaccination for adolescents and adults

Catch-up vaccination aims to provide the best protection against disease as quickly as possible by completing a person’s recommended vaccination schedule.

1 Confirm the person’s vaccination history

- Review the person’s vaccination history to determine whether they are up to date.
- If you cannot confirm previous vaccination, assume the person has not received that vaccine. People can safely receive most vaccines as additional doses, except for Q fever.
- If you are not sure how to plan the catch-up schedule, or if the catch-up is complicated, seek further advice from your state or territory health authority.

2 Plan a catch-up schedule

- Consider laboratory testing for immunity to some diseases
  - Do not use laboratory testing for any other diseases.
  - Do not use past infection to guide the catch-up schedule.
  - Do not give Q fever vaccine if unsure about the person’s Q fever immunisation status.
- Consider valid doses
  - In almost all cases, do not repeat valid doses — count them as part of the schedule.
- Refer to catch-up resources
  - Use the catch-up resources in the Australian Immunisation Handbook to help plan a catch-up schedule.
- Use the HALO principle for adults
  - When planning which vaccines are needed, consider the person’s:
    - health
    - age
    - lifestyle
    - occupation

3 Start the catch-up schedule

- Discuss the catch-up schedule with the person, or their parent or carer before starting.
- Do not use childhood combination vaccines for adolescents or adults.

See the Australian Immunisation Handbook for more details.