

WHAT IS AN ADVERSE EVENT FOLLOWING IMMUNIZATION?

An adverse event following immunization (AEFI) is an unwanted or unexpected health effect that happens after someone receives a vaccine, which may or may not be caused by the vaccine.

- Most people who receive vaccines experience no side effects; however, in some people, vaccines can cause minor events such as low-grade fever, or pain or redness at the injection site, from which they quickly recover.
- Vaccines can cause known, but rare, more serious reactions such as anaphylaxis, which can occur in approximately one out of every 1 million doses of vaccine given.
- Events reported as an AEFI may also occur by chance (i.e., not caused by the vaccine).

MONITORING ADVERSE EVENTS IS ESSENTIAL TO VACCINE SAFETY AND VACCINE CONFIDENCE

- Vaccine safety is a top priority for Ontario.
- All vaccines are extensively tested before use and are monitored for safety and effectiveness.
- Provincial, federal, and international monitoring systems are in place to track vaccine safety after vaccines are in use.^{i, ii}
- In Ontario, local public health units investigate reported adverse events and provide support to immunizers, individuals, and their families.
- By reporting adverse events, possible vaccine safety issues can be detected early to lessen health effects on those who need vaccines.

DO YOUR PART TO MONITOR ADVERSE EVENTS!

1 Advise patients to contact you if they experience an adverse event after vaccination.

2 Report adverse events to your local public health unit, using Public Health Ontario's [Report of Adverse Event Following Immunization Reporting Form](#).

3 For more information on how to report an adverse event, please refer to Public Health Ontario's [Adverse Event Following Immunization Reporting fact sheet for health care providers](#).

https://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Report_Adverse_Event_Following_Immunization_Form_fillable.pdf

References

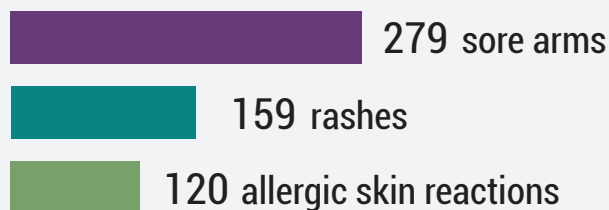
- i Government of Canada. Vaccine safety [Internet]. Ottawa, ON: Government of Canada; 2018 [updated 2018 Mar 16; cited 2018 Aug 20]. Available from: <https://www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization/vaccine-safety.html>
- ii Uppsala Monitoring Centre. Welcome to Uppsala Monitoring Centre [Internet]. Uppsala, SW: Uppsala Monitoring Centre; 2018 [cited 2018 Aug 20]. Available from: <https://www.who-umc.org/>
- iii Ontario Agency for Health Protection and Promotion (Public Health Ontario). Annual report on vaccine safety in Ontario, 2017. Toronto, ON: Queen's Printer for Ontario; 2018. Available from: www.publichealthontario.ca/en/BrowseByTopic/InfectiousDiseases/Pages/Vaccine-Safety.aspx

8.5 million

Approximate number of publicly funded vaccine doses distributed in Ontario

696 reports of adverse events following immunization

Most reported events were **mild**



Serious events after vaccines were **very rare**

26 serious events reported, representing:
3 in every 1 million doses distributed



Vaccines protect us from serious diseases and save lives.



The risk of serious effects from vaccines is very small compared to the risk of the diseases they prevent.



Health care providers play a vital role in keeping vaccines safe by reporting adverse events after immunization and communicating the benefits of vaccines to their patients.

For all AEFI inquiries, including questions about the form or determining if an AEFI should be reported, contact your local [public health unit](#).

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