

# 2023 Year 7 and 8 School Immunisation Program

## Dear Parent/Legal Guardian

Students in **Year 7 and 8** are offered free vaccines under the National Immunisation Program to protect them from diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, and human papillomavirus (HPV).

A trained vaccination team will visit your child's school to offer these vaccinations. Your child will receive two injections at the first school visit: one combined vaccine for diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and one human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine, with the second HPV vaccine six months later.

Included with this letter is the **Year 7 and 8 Consent Card**. Please read all the information on both sides of this page before completing the consent card and discuss these vaccines with your child.

**It is important that you complete the *Consent Card* and return it to the school, even if you DO NOT consent for your child to be vaccinated at school.**

**Your child may have already received some of the vaccines offered in the School Immunisation Program if they have received catch up vaccines for missed childhood doses. Please make note of these details on the *Consent Card* in the space provided.**

Consent may be withdrawn at any time prior to vaccination by contacting your **School Immunisation Program provider**. It is very important to contact the School Immunisation Program provider if the student has received the vaccine/s elsewhere before the school visit or if other information provided on the Consent Card needs to be updated.

Students will receive a vaccination record to take home. This contains important information regarding possible side effects after vaccination.

If you have provided consent and your child is unwell or not at school on vaccination day, the School Immunisation Program provider will advise how your child can access the missed vaccines.

All immunisations administered to children and adolescents are recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register. Parents/legal guardians of students aged less than 14 years can access an immunisation history statement either from their **Medicare online account** through **myGov** or by using the **Express Plus Medicare** mobile app.

*Due to privacy laws, anyone aged 14 years or older needs to access their own statement or give permission to the Australian Government Department of Human Services for their parents/legal guardians to access their history statement.*

## Further information about immunisation is available at:

- Parent and student high school vaccination videos: [health.gov.au/resources/collections/vaccination-videos-for-high-school-students](https://health.gov.au/resources/collections/vaccination-videos-for-high-school-students)
- SA Health – School Immunisation Program: [sahealth.sa.gov.au/school-immunisations](https://sahealth.sa.gov.au/school-immunisations)
- Australian Government Department of Health: [health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation](https://health.gov.au/health-topics/immunisation)
- National Centre for Immunisation Research and Surveillance: [ncirs.edu.au](https://ncirs.edu.au)

## Privacy

- The information you provide on the *Consent Card*, and information related to vaccines administered will be stored electronically and/or in hard copy as a medical record. This information will be disclosed to staff involved in the provision of an immunisation service for SA Health and local government councils and their immunisation providers. The immunisation records will be recorded on the Australian Immunisation Register where it will be stored on your child's Medicare account.
- If you are concerned that personal information has been misused or subject to unauthorised access, contact your School Immunisation Program provider. If the issue remains unresolved, contact SA Health Immunisation Section on 1300 232 272.

For more information

Immunisation Section  
Communicable Disease Control Branch  
[sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation](https://sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation)

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# Year 7 and 8 Parent/Legal Guardian Information

## Diphtheria

- Diphtheria is a serious infection of the throat and nose caused by a toxin produced by the bacterium *Corynebacterium diphtheriae*
- spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes or by direct contact with skin sores or objects/articles contaminated by an infected person
- 1 in 6 people infected will die

### Complications include:

- severe breathing difficulties
- heart failure
- nerve paralysis or weakness
- death

## Tetanus

- serious, often fatal, disease caused by a toxin produced by bacteria found in soil, dust and manure
- contracted through a cut or wound which becomes contaminated by the bacteria
- not directly transmitted from person to person
- most common in persons never vaccinated or those vaccinated many years ago
- 2 in 100 people infected will die

### Complications include:

- serious heart problems
- blood clot in the lungs
- pneumonia
- death

## Whooping cough (pertussis)

- highly infectious respiratory infection
- spread when an infected person coughs or sneezes
- about 90% of household contacts of an infected person will become infected if they are not vaccinated or were vaccinated many years ago

### Complications include:

- rib fractures
- seizures
- pneumonia
- brain damage from lack of oxygen

## Diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis vaccine (Boostrix®)

- is recommended as a single dose for all Year 8 students as an **additional** booster to doses already received in childhood
- is recommended for students who have previously received the ADT Booster (Adsorbed Diphtheria and Tetanus) vaccine for a tetanus prone wound as it will offer protection against whooping cough

## Common side effects of Boostrix® vaccine

- pain, redness and swelling at the injection site
- fever
- headache
- nausea, generally feeling unwell
- muscle aches and joint pain
- tiredness

## Human papillomavirus (HPV)

- very common virus that affects females and males
- spread by intimate or sexual contact
- it is estimated that most of the general population will be infected with at least one genital HPV type at some time in their lives
- most people do not experience symptoms and do not know if they have the infection or if they have spread it to someone else
- causes 90% of genital warts

### Complications include:

- cancers of the genital area – penis, anus, vulva, vagina, and cervix
- cancers of the throat and mouth in both males and females

## HPV vaccine (Gardasil®9)

- is recommended as a 2 dose course in the School Immunisation Program. It is important that both doses are given
- if your child is immunocompromised, speak to your doctor or immunisation provider as a 3rd dose may be required
- protects against nine HPV types most commonly related to genital cancers, throat and mouth cancers and genital warts
- provides a high level of protection if given to students before exposure to the HPV virus
- will still be beneficial even if there has been exposure to the virus as it is unlikely that infection with all HPV types covered by the vaccine has occurred
- does not replace regular cervical screening for women as the vaccine protects against most, but not all types of HPV that cause cervical cancer. Further information is available from [sahealth.sa.gov.au/HPVvaccine](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/HPVvaccine) or your doctor

## Common side effects of Gardasil®9 vaccine

- pain, swelling and redness at the injection site
- fever
- headache
- nausea
- muscle aches
- dizziness
- tiredness

Severe reactions to vaccines are very rare. If you need further information on the safety of vaccines, please contact your school immunisation provider or visit SA Health: [sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation](http://sahealth.sa.gov.au/immunisation)

