

## 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.<sup>i, ii</sup>
- 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](#).

[www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Report\\_Adverse\\_Event\\_Following\\_Immunization\\_Form\\_fillable\\_2013.pdf](http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/Report_Adverse_Event_Following_Immunization_Form_fillable_2013.pdf)

**3** For more information on how to report an adverse event, please refer to [Public Health Ontario's Adverse Event Following Immunization \(AEFI\) Reporting Form Provider Questions and Answers](#).

[www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/QsAs\\_Adverse\\_Event\\_Following\\_Immunization\\_Reporting\\_Form\\_2012.pdf](http://www.publichealthontario.ca/en/eRepository/QsAs_Adverse_Event_Following_Immunization_Reporting_Form_2012.pdf)

### References

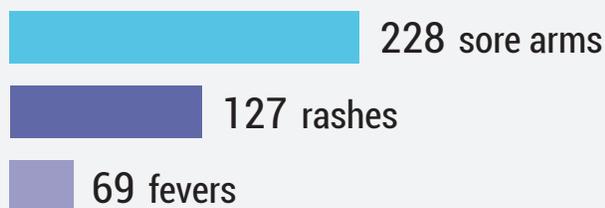
- i Vaccine Safety [Internet]. Ottawa: Public Health Agency of Canada; 2015 May 14 [cited 2015 Aug 28]. Available from: <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/vs-sv/index-eng.php>
- ii WHO Programme for International Drug Monitoring Members [Internet]. Uppsala: Uppsala Monitoring Centre; 2015 Jul 22 [cited 2015 Aug 28]. Available from <http://www.who-umc.org/DynPage.aspx?id=100653&mn1=7347&mn2=7252&mn3=7322&mn4=7442>
- iii Harris T, Wong K, Seo C, Shing E, Fediurek J, Deeks SL. Annual report on Vaccine Safety in Ontario, 2014. Toronto: Public Health Ontario; 2015. [www.publichealthontario.ca/VaccineSafety](http://www.publichealthontario.ca/VaccineSafety)

# 8.4 million

Approximate number of publicly funded  
vaccine doses distributed in Ontario

568 adverse events following  
immunizations reported

Most reported events were **mild**



Serious events after vaccines are **very rare**.

**23** serious events were  
reported, which represents:  
**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**.

[www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx](http://www.health.gov.on.ca/en/common/system/services/phu/locations.aspx)

**PublicHealthOntario.ca**