



# Protect your child against polio

Get the polio booster vaccine available for children aged one to nine years.



Polio has been detected locally. The NHS has advised all children in London aged one to nine get a polio vaccine to protect them against the potential spread of the virus.



Available in addition to your child's regular polio vaccination schedule, unless they have had a polio vaccine within the last 12 months.



The polio vaccine is safe, has been used for over 70 years, and is the best way to protect your child against disease.



Contact your GP practice to book a vaccination, visit [bit.ly/3U5kQyc](https://bit.ly/3U5kQyc) or scan the QR code

# Frequently asked questions

## What is polio?

Polio is an infection caused by a virus that attacks the nervous system – it can cause permanent paralysis of muscles and can be fatal. Polio is now very rare because of a successful vaccination programme. The chance of getting it in the UK is extremely low.

## Why is there a new polio vaccine?

Since February 2022, traces of polio have been found in sewage samples taken from north London. This should not pose any risk to those who are fully vaccinated. However, whilst it is spreading, there is a chance that those not fully vaccinated could be at risk of catching polio.

The NHS is providing an extra polio dose to all children in London aged one to nine years old to boost their immunity.

## Why does my child need a booster if they are up to date with their vaccinations?

Children aged one to nine have not received the full programme of vaccination yet, so they are not fully protected against polio. An extra dose will ensure your child is protected against polio and stop any further spread of polio virus in London.

## Is the vaccine safe?

Yes, the vaccine is safe. The NHS will provide three different types of vaccines that are already used in the routine polio vaccination schedule and are safely given to millions of children every year. These vaccines also protect against tetanus and diphtheria.

## What is the risk of not getting the booster jab?

Your child is at risk of developing a virus that attacks the nervous system which can cause permanent paralysis of muscles. It also increases the risk of spreading the disease to others.

## Are there any side effects?

For a few days, your child may have some redness, swelling or tenderness in the arm where they had the Injection. Rarely, a hard lump may appear in the same place, but this will also resolve on its own, usually over a few weeks. Occasionally, children may be unwell and irritable and develop a temperature and a headache.

## How can I find out if my child has been vaccinated or not?

Your child's vaccination status should be detailed in their Personal Child Health Record (red book). If you don't know where this is, contact your GP practice.

## How do I book my child's polio vaccination?

Contact your GP practice to book an appointment for your child's polio vaccine. Please ensure your child is registered with a GP. Alternatively, visit [bit.ly/3U5kQyc](https://bit.ly/3U5kQyc) to book at a local vaccination clinic.

## What happens after my child gets the vaccine?

After your child has had this extra dose, they may still need to complete or catch up on the routine doses at the recommended age (or as soon as possible afterwards). Check with your GP practice.