Types of adverse events that may occur after vaccination

Adverse Reactions (side effects)

Where side effects occur in the body

* **Local reactions** occur where the shot was given. They are usually mild and occur within a few hours of the shot. Injections site pain, redness or swelling are most commonly reported local adverse reactions.
* **Systemic reactions** include fever, headache, body aches, fatigue, etc. These reactions are usually mild and can last for several days.  
  **Source:** [Chapter 2 General Recommendations on Immunization. [Epidemiology and Prevention of Vaccine Preventable Diseases. 2015]](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/pubs/pinkbook/genrec.html).

Adverse reactions, also known as **side effects,** are considered to be caused by a vaccine. Usually, vaccine side effects are identified during clinical trials. The intensity of these reactions may range from mild to moderate to severe. They often resolve on their own, and may or may not require medical intervention. Depending on severity, an adverse reaction may also be considered a serious adverse event.

Unrelated health problems following vaccination

People can experience health problems following vaccination that would have occurred even if the person was not vaccinated. These health problems are not related to the vaccine.

Health problems with an unknown cause

People can experience health problems following vaccination, but the cause of these events are unknown. There is not enough evidence to say whether it was caused by the vaccine.