



Pregnancy Pearls

Immunisation in Pregnancy - Part 1

What is immunisation?

In simple terms, immunisation is a process where our immune system is prepared or 'primed' to deal with exposure to infectious agents (bacteria or viruses).

How are we immunised?

Essentially the process of vaccination involves exposing our immune system to particular parts of a bacteria or virus (or to an inactive form of the whole bacteria or virus) usually by means of an injection into a large muscle or occasionally by an oral preparation.

The vaccines contain particles called "antigens" and are designed to be recognised by our immune system as something foreign and cause it to develop a protective response without causing the infection that would normally occur if we were exposed to the actual infectious bug.

Once the body recognises the vaccine it mounts an "immune response" which gives rise to some of the side effects of the vaccine (localised redness and soreness at the injection site, mild fever).

The body produces proteins called immunoglobulins (Ig for short) which then hang around waiting for the next time we are exposed to that particular antigen. If and when that occurs, the immune response is much quicker and more effective, essentially eliminating the bug before it can take a hold and cause an infection.

In Part 2, I'll chat about the "why" and "when" with respect to pregnancy.

Please seek advice if you need assistance in any of these areas, and all the best in your future pregnancies.

The above information doesn't take the place of a medical consultation so please seek further advice if your symptoms continue to concern you.

Contact us to book an appointment

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