

The Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS)

VAERS is a national vaccine safety surveillance program co-sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). VAERS collects and analyzes information from reports of adverse events following immunization. Since 1990, VAERS has received over 371,000 reports, most of which describe mild side effects such as fever. Very rarely, people experience serious adverse events following immunization. By monitoring such events, VAERS can help to identify important new safety concerns.

WHO? Anyone can submit a VAERS report. Most reports are sent in by vaccine manufacturers and health care providers, but state immunization programs, vaccine recipients or their parent/guardian, and others may also submit reports.

WHAT? VAERS encourages reporting of any clinically significant adverse event that occurs after the administration of any vaccine licensed in the United States.

The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act requires health care providers to report:

- Any event listed by the vaccine manufacturer as a contraindication to subsequent doses of the vaccine,
- Any event listed in the Reportable Events Table that occurs within the specified time period after the vaccination.

(A copy of the Reportable Events Table can be found on the following page, or obtained by calling VAERS at 1-800-822-7967 or by downloading it from <http://vaers.hhs.gov/resources/vaersmaterialspublications>.)

HOW? There are three ways to report to VAERS:

- **Online.** Complete a VAERS online form at <https://vaers.hhs.gov/esub/step1>. Before you begin, review the Instructions for Completing the VAERS On-Line Form at <http://vaers.hhs.gov/esub/help>. The VAERS On-Line form has a 20 minute limit to complete each step, and your information will be erased if you time out. You will receive a warning after 15 minutes. Information supplied on this form is transmitted securely to VAERS.
- **Fax.** Download a VAERS form at http://vaers.hhs.gov/resources/vaers_form.pdf, or request a form by sending an e-mail to info@vaers.org, by calling 800-822-7967, or by faxing a request to 877-721-0366. Review the Instructions for Completing the VAERS Paper Form at <http://vaers.hhs.gov/help/instructions>. Fax the completed form to 877-721-0366.
- **Mail.** Download a VAERS form at http://vaers.hhs.gov/resources/vaers_form.pdf, or request a form by sending an e-mail to info@vaers.org, by calling 800-822-7967, or by faxing a request to 877-721-0366. Review the Instructions for Completing the VAERS Paper Form at <http://vaers.hhs.gov/help/instructions>. Mail the completed form to VAERS, P.O. Box 1100, Rockville, MD 20849-1100. A pre-paid postage stamp is included on the back of the form.