

Information Sheet

Yellow Fever Vaccination

Date: April 2011

What is yellow fever and why should I have a vaccination?

Yellow fever is an acute life-threatening infectious disease which can be fatal. The yellow fever virus is transmitted by mosquitos. It occurs in certain tropical regions of South America and Africa designated by the World Health Organization (WHO) as yellow fever risk areas. In these areas the disease can be transmitted in both rural and urban environments. For your personal protection you should be vaccinated against yellow fever at the latest 10 days before entry into these areas. Many countries also demand the presentation by persons coming from yellow fever risk areas of an internationally valid certificate (vaccination certificate [Impfpass]) showing that they have been vaccinated against yellow fever before they can enter the country.

How is the yellow fever vaccination administered?

The yellow fever vaccination in the form of a live-virus vaccine, i.e. attenuated yellow fever vaccine virus, is injected subcutaneously in the upper arm and is generally well tolerated. The viruses multiply in the first two to seven days following the vaccination, causing your immune system to develop antibodies. Complete protection is provided 10 days after vaccination and lasts at least 10 years.

Possible reactions following vaccination

In 20–25 per cent of persons vaccinated, a local reaction with slight redness, swelling or pain at the injection site occurs within one to three days of the vaccination, sometimes with lymph node involvement and headache. On rare occasions the reaction can be more protracted. Influenza-like symptoms such as mild fever, fatigue, pain in the joints and limbs, nausea, vomiting and diarrhoea, occasionally stomach ache, can occur in up to 10 per cent of cases within four to seven days after vaccination. The symptoms normally disappear quickly and without the need for medical intervention.

Very rarely observed reactions

General hypersensitivity reactions such as nettle rash, swelling of the throat with difficulty in breathing and shock can occur within minutes or hours of the vaccination in persons with allergies, particularly to egg protein or other components of the vaccine. Delayed allergic reactions of the skin or pain in muscles and joints or, even more rarely, a reduction in blood platelets (thrombocytopenia) with tendency to bleed are possible in highly allergic persons up to two weeks after the vaccination. On very rare occasions encephalitis, meningitis or severe yellow-fever-like diseases of other organs have been observed following initial vaccination. In total there have been around 30 cases of severe adverse reactions and 17 deaths in over 400 million vaccinations. No deaths have been reported to date in Germany. As the risk of severe adverse reactions appears to be greater in elderly persons, the vaccine manufacturer STAMARIL® recommends in its instructions for patients that first vaccinations be administered to persons over 60 years of age only in the event of a high and unavoidable risk of a yellow fever infection. If you belong to this group of persons, please discuss the vaccination with your doctor. As some vaccinated persons with severe adverse reactions have been observed to have had organic and functional thymic diseases, this should also be taken into account as an additional risk of severe adverse reactions.

When the vaccination should *not* be given

The vaccination should not be given to persons with acute or chronic infections, diseases of the nervous system, severe hepatic diseases, hypersensitivity (allergy) to egg protein or vaccine components, diseases of the endogenous immune system (including symptomatic HIV infection or HIV infection with under 200 Helper T cells/mm³), immunosuppressive therapy (e.g. systemic cortisone treatment with tablets or

injections or other immunosuppressive drugs), radiotherapy and chemotherapy, pregnancy, allergy desensitisation, after thymectomy or in patients with dysthymia, and infants under nine months. Other live-virus vaccinations (mumps, measles and German measles, or chickenpox) must be administered four weeks before or after the yellow fever vaccination. The vaccinating doctor should be informed of other vaccinations and also the administration of an immunoglobulin or antibody preparation (e.g. against hepatitis). The vaccine viruses are not transmitted by contact, and other family members (including pregnant women or infants) are not therefore at risk.

If any of these circumstances applies to you or if you are uncertain whether you should receive a yellow fever vaccination, please discuss your reservations with the vaccinating doctor.

What to do after the vaccination

For one week after the vaccination you should not over-exert yourself (serious sport, surgery, sauna) and you should avoid sunbathing or excessive alcohol consumption. You cannot donate blood for four weeks after the vaccination. Pregnancy should be avoided for at least four weeks after the vaccination, preferably for as much as three months. Vaccination during pregnancy or conception after vaccination do not constitute grounds for termination of the pregnancy, however. Vaccinations should not be carried out while breast-feeding.

Please consult your doctor if symptoms occur that could be connected with the vaccination.

Please answer the following questions to determine the risk of possible adverse reactions following a yellow fever vaccination and to exclude contraindications.

Mark as applicable	yes	no
1. Do you have an acute or chronic infection?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. Do you have a heart, liver or kidney disease?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Do you have a disease of the nervous system?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Have you had a thymectomy or dysthymia?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Do you have an allergy or asthma?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Are you allergic to egg protein?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
7. Has your immune system been affected by disease (e.g. internal disease, HIV/AIDS) or treatment (chemotherapy, desensitisation, cortisone therapy, radiotherapy)?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
8. Do you take any medication? If so, what? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
9. Have you been vaccinated in the last 4 weeks? If so, for what? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
10. Have you noticed any recent changes in your body or general state of health? If so, what and when? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
11. Are you diabetic?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
12. <u>Only for women:</u> Are you pregnant?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
13. Have you ever been vaccinated against yellow fever before?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
14. Which country/countries are you travelling to? _____	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
15. <u>For 60+ persons:</u> Is the trip unavoidable, be it for business or private reasons?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

I have been informed in full of the need for the vaccination and its possible consequences and adverse reactions. I have read and understood this information sheet and answered the questionnaire in full. I have had the opportunity to discuss all questions with the physician and have no further questions.

Information provided and vaccination given.

Date, signature of vaccinating physician

Date, signature of patient or guardian