

Table 2.2.2: Recommended needle size, length and angle for administering vaccines^{10,16,18,21,25}

Age or size of child/adult	Needle type	Angle of needle insertion
Infant, child or adult for IM vaccines	23 or 25 gauge,* 25 mm in length [†]	90° to skin plane
Preterm babies (<37 weeks gestation) up to 2 months of age; and/or very small infants	23 or 25 gauge,* 16 mm in length	90° to skin plane
Very large or obese patient	23 or 25 gauge, 38 mm in length	90° to skin plane
Subcutaneous injection in all persons	25 or 26 gauge, 16 mm in length	45° to skin plane

* If using a narrow 25 gauge needle for an IM vaccination, ensure vaccine is injected slowly over a count of 5 seconds to avoid injection pain and muscle trauma.

† The use of short needles for administering IM vaccines may lead to inadvertent SC injection and increase the risk of significant local adverse events, particularly with aluminium-adsorbed vaccines (e.g. hepatitis B, DTPa, DTPa-combination or dT vaccines).