

# Considering an Alternate Vaccine Schedule?



**Public Health**  
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Following an alternate childhood vaccine schedule, or otherwise limiting shots might sound like a good idea to parents doing their best to find answers to their vaccine concerns, but there are some reasons it is not.

According to researchers from the Oregon Immunization Program:

- Altered schedules resulted not only in bigger gaps between vaccinations but overall lower levels of immunization. Many shot-limited children miss certain vaccines altogether.
- By 9 months of age, babies on alternate schedules had received fewer shots, leaving them more vulnerable to infection. Most delayers end up never receiving all the recommended vaccines for children entering kindergarten.
- With some diseases, like whooping cough which is much more serious during infancy, an early start on immunizing is necessary to have protection by 6 months of age.

Vaccine advocates note that no evidence has been found to show that delaying vaccination is helpful for babies – and it can be harmful. “There is absolutely no scientific data that shows a delayed schedule is any safer,” says Wendy Sue Swanson, a pediatrician who blogs for Seattle Children’s Hospital under the handle Seattle Mama Doc.

A council of experts meets regularly to develop specific vaccine recommendations.



These experts work in the fields of vaccinology, immunology, pediatrics, internal medicine, nursing, family medicine, virology, public health, infectious diseases, and preventive medicine. This council is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics, the CDC and the American Academy of Family Physicians.

Talk to your healthcare provider if you are concerned about a condition that might be a reason to delay or withhold vaccines.

***“The main problem with alternative schedules is they’re tough to stick to. It is harder for parents to pull it off”***

**Paul Cieslak,**  
Medical Director for the  
Oregon Immunization Program

VACCINATION EDUCATION