

Wondering Whether You Should Vaccinate Your Baby?



Public Health
Prevent. Promote. Protect.

VACCINATION EDUCATION

Points TO consider:

Can children manage so many different vaccines at the same time?

Within minutes of leaving the womb, an infant is exposed to thousands of microorganisms, including bacteria and viruses. By the end of the first week of life, the child's skin, nose, throat and intestines are covered with tens of thousands of different bacteria. Fortunately, from the moment of birth, infants begin to develop an active immune response to these bacteria which keeps them from getting sick.

The number of recommended vaccines that children receive in the first two years of life are just a drop in the ocean when compared to the tens of thousands of environmental challenges that babies successfully manage every day.

Is it safer to delay vaccines or use an alternative schedule?

Many doctors, researchers and scientists work with the CDC and other health organizations to determine what is the best timing for giving shots to children. The goal: Protect babies as soon as it is safe and effective to do so. Using an alternative vaccine schedule simply means you are leaving your child unprotected when she or he is most vulnerable. In addition, many children on alternate vaccine schedules never fully catch up on all their vaccines.



Simply put, vaccines save lives.

The best thing you can do for your child's health is to learn the facts of how babies are affected by these diseases so that you can make the best choices for yourself and your family.

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Vaccines have made the difference in saving children's lives throughout the last century, and still do today.

From The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia website: www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-safety/

www.mhealth.org

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Most parents today have never seen the consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases have on a family or community.

Why do we still need vaccines?

Some diseases, like pertussis, hepatitis B and influenza (flu) are still so common that the choice not to get vaccinated is the choice to risk natural infection.

Some diseases have been virtually eliminated from the United States, but still occur in other parts of the world. It is quite possible for the disease to come to the US (through travel) or for us to go to a place where the disease exists. Examples of these diseases include polio, rubella and diphtheria.

For most Americans today, vaccines are a routine part of healthcare.

Further resources:

- Your provider
- www.immunize.org
- www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/infant-toddlers.html
- www.chop.edu/service/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-safety/
- www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/pregnant.html

Any vaccine can cause side effects.

For the most part these are minor (for example, a sore arm or a low-grade fever) and go away within a few days. Check the CDC website (www.cdc.gov/vaccines) for vaccines and their side effects. This information is copied directly from CDC's Vaccine Information Statements, which come from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) recommendations for each vaccine.



Remember, no medication is 100% safe, and vaccines are continually monitored for safety. Vaccines can cause side effects. However, a decision not to immunize a child is also risky and could put your child and others who come into contact with him or her at risk of contracting a potentially deadly disease.