

Disease Control and Prevention, govern the recommendations for immunization policies and procedures. In Canada, recommendations are from the National Advisory Committee on Immunization under the authority of the Minister of Health and Public Health Agency of Canada. The policies of each committee are recommendations, not rules, and they change as a result of advances in the field of immunology. Nurses need to be knowledgeable about the purpose of each organization, view immunization practices in light of the needs of each individual child and the community, and keep informed of the latest advances and changes in policy.

The recommended age for beginning primary immunizations of infants is at birth or within 2 weeks of birth. Children born preterm should receive the full dose of each vaccine at the appropriate chronologic age. A recommended catch-up schedule for children not immunized during infancy is available at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention website

(<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>).

Immunization recommendation schedules for Canadian children are available at <http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/is-cv/index-eng.php>.

Children who began primary immunization at the recommended age but fail to receive all the doses do not need to begin the series again but instead receive only the missed doses. For situations in which there is doubt that the child will return for immunization according to the optimum schedule, HBV vaccine (HepB), DTaP, IPV (poliovirus vaccine), MMR, varicella, and Hib vaccines can be administered simultaneously at separate injection sites. Parenteral vaccines are given in separate syringes in different injection sites ([American Academy of Pediatrics, 2015](#)).

## **Recommendations for Routine Immunizations\***

### **Hepatitis B Virus**

HBV is a significant pediatric disease because HBV infections that occur during childhood and adolescence can lead to fatal consequences from cirrhosis or liver cancer during adulthood. Up to 90% of infants infected perinatally and 25% to 50% of children infected before 5 years old become HBV carriers. In addition, the