

Childhood Vaccines



To keep your child healthy, they should get childhood vaccines. Many vaccines are given in a series of doses over a period of time. Your child needs each dose at the right time. The exact number of vaccines your child needs may vary. Your healthcare provider may also have combination vaccines. This type of vaccine prevents more than 1 illness in each vaccine.

Vaccines may cause mild side effects. Talk with your child's provider about the risks and benefits of vaccines. Talk with the provider if your child has missed any vaccines. Your child will need catch-up vaccines to have full protection.



Below is a list of childhood illnesses and the routine vaccines used to prevent them.

Hepatitis B (Hep B)

Hepatitis B is caused by a virus. It can damage the liver. Some people with Hep B may later have liver cancer or liver failure. The Hep B vaccine is usually given in 3 doses. It's given soon after birth, at age 1 to 2 months, and at age 6 to 18 months.

Rotavirus (RV)

Rotavirus disease is caused by the rotavirus. The illness causes severe vomiting and diarrhea in young children. It can lead to severe dehydration. Children often need to be treated in the hospital. The rotavirus vaccine is available in a 2- or 3-dose series. The 2-dose series is given at ages 2 and 4 months. The 3-dose series is given at ages 2 months, 4 months, and 6 months.

Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (DTaP)

Diphtheria. This is an infection caused by bacteria. It can cause trouble swallowing or breathing. It can also cause swollen neck glands. In severe cases, the bacteria can spread through the bloodstream. It can damage the heart and other organs. It may lead to death.

Tetanus. This is an infection caused by bacteria. It can lead to muscle spasms that keep you from opening your mouth, swallowing, or breathing. Even with treatment, the condition most often leads to death.

Pertussis. This is also known as whooping cough. It's an infection caused by bacteria. It causes coughing and choking spells. It can also lead to pneumonia or brain damage in infants. The DTaP vaccine is given in 5 doses. It's given at ages 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, 15 to 18 months, and 4 to 6 years. Your child also needs a

booster dose (called the Tdap) at ages 11 to 12 years. If they are older than that, the Tdap should replace the next tetanus and diphtheria (Td) booster. Your child should then get the Tdap or Td booster every 10 years throughout life.

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib)

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) is a kind of bacteria. It can cause inflammation of the membrane covering the brain and spinal cord. This is known as meningitis. Hib can also cause pneumonia and other serious infections. A 4-dose Hib vaccine is given at ages 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and 12 to 15 months. A 3-dose Hib vaccine is given at age 2 months and 4 months, and then at 12 to 15 months. Talk with your child's healthcare provider about which type of vaccine your child needs.

Inactivated polio (IPV)

Polio is caused by a virus. It can cause permanent paralysis of the muscles. This includes the muscles that control breathing. Polio can also lead to death. The polio vaccine is given as a shot (injection) in the muscle in 4 doses. It's given at ages 2 months, 4 months, 6 to 18 months, and 4 to 6 years.

Anyone who travels to a country where polio is still active should have a current vaccine against polio. A young child should complete their polio vaccine series before travel. But a faster series may be advised if a child is traveling sooner. Talk with your healthcare provider before travel. Make sure your family's vaccines are up-to-date.

Measles, mumps, and rubella (MMR)

Measles. This is a virus. It causes fever and a rash. It can also cause hearing loss, brain damage, or death.

Mumps. This is a virus. It causes fever, headache, and swollen, painful glands under the jaw. It can damage the testes and cause infertility. Mumps can also lead to hearing loss. It can cause inflammation of the brain and spinal cord.

Rubella. This is also known as German measles. It is a virus. It causes fever, swollen glands, and rash. If a pregnant person has rubella, her baby may be born with severe health problems.

The MMR vaccine is given in 2 doses. It's given at ages 12 to 15 months, and 4 to 6 years. Talk with your healthcare provider if your family plans to travel to an area where there is a measles outbreak. The provider may speed up the vaccine schedule.

Varicella (chickenpox)

Varicella is caused by a virus. It causes itchy skin blisters. In rare cases, a child may develop pneumonia, severe skin infections, or inflammation of the brain (encephalitis). This can lead to death.

The vaccine is given in 2 doses. It's given at ages 12 to 15 months, and ages 4 to 6 years.

Meningococcal

Meningococcal disease is caused by bacteria. It can cause an inflammation of the membrane covering the brain and spinal cord (meningitis). Symptoms include high fever, headache, and stiff neck. If not treated, it can lead to other serious health problems. These can include brain damage, hearing loss, or learning disability. In some cases, it can cause death.

There are 3 types of meningococcal vaccines. They protect against strains of meningococcus bacteria. The vaccines are:

- **MenACWY vaccine.** This is advised for **all** preteens. It's given at ages 11 to 12, with a booster shot at age 16. This protects against meningococcal bacteria types A, C, W, and Y.
- **MenB vaccine.** This protects against meningococcal bacteria type B. Teens and young adults ages 16 to 23 may also get this vaccine if they are at risk for type B meningococcal disease outbreak. This applies to young adults who live in close contact with other people. This includes college freshmen

living in dormitories. It includes young adults in military barracks. Talk with your child's healthcare provider to learn more about MenB.

- **MenABCWY vaccine.** This protects against meningococcal bacteria types A, B, C, W, and Y. Those who are getting MenACWY and MenB vaccines at the same visit may instead get a MenABCWY vaccine. Children 10 years and older who are getting MenACWY and MenB vaccines at the same visit may instead get a MenABCWY vaccine. Talk to your child's healthcare provider.

If your child has a weak immune system from HIV or another health condition, they may need these vaccines at a younger age. Your child's healthcare provider will advise you.

Pneumococcal

Pneumococcal disease is caused by bacteria. It can affect the brain and spinal cord, lungs, and ears. In severe cases, infection can be deadly. The PCV13 or PCV15 vaccine is given to healthy children in 4 doses. It's given at ages 2 months, 4 months, 6 months, and 12 to 15 months. Some children with high-risk health conditions may also need vaccine PCV23. This is given in addition to PCV13 or PCV15.

Influenza (flu)

Influenza is caused by a virus. It can lead to fever, headache, sore throat, cough, and muscle aches. It can also lead to pneumonia and death, especially in very young children.

Children should get the vaccine starting at 6 months of age. The flu vaccine is given every year during the fall. Children 6 months to 8 years having the vaccine for the first time need 2 doses.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19)

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is an illness that infects the lungs. It's caused by a type of coronavirus. The virus is called SARS-CoV-2. Experts advise COVID-19 vaccines for everyone age 6 months or older. Talk with your child's healthcare provider to learn more.

Hepatitis A (Hep A)

Hepatitis A is caused by a virus. It can cause sudden liver inflammation. The Hep A vaccine is given in 2 doses at least 6 months apart. It starts at age 1 year.

Human papillomavirus (HPV)

Genital HPV infection is caused by a virus. It is a sexually transmitted infection (STI). Infection with certain types of the virus can cause genital warts. They can also cause cervical, vaginal, or vulvar cancers. For the vaccine to work, it should be given in late childhood. The vaccine is given in 2 doses:

- The first dose is advised at age 11 to 12. But it may be given as early as age 9 or as late as age 14.
- The second dose is given 6 to 12 months after the first.

Children who miss the age range for HPV and don't start the series until age 15 or later should get 3 doses. The second dose is given 1 to 2 months after the first. The third is given 6 months after the first.

Respiratory syncytial virus vaccination (RSV)

RSV is a common respiratory virus. It often causes mild, cold-like symptoms. Infants are more likely to have severe RSV and need hospitalization.

To prevent severe RSV disease in infants, the CDC recommends having 1 of the following:

- Maternal RSV vaccination at 32 through 36 weeks of pregnancy

- Infant RSV immunization with nirsevimab (an RSV monoclonal antibody) for infants aged 8 months and younger born during or entering their first RSV season.

Most infants will not need both.

Nirsevimab may also be advised for some infants and children ages 8 through 19 months. It is recommended for those who are at greater risk for severe RSV disease. And those who are starting their second RSV season. Talk to the provider to see if the RSV shot is advised for your baby.

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