



Protect Your Child at Every Age

Overview

Immunizations have had an enormous impact on improving the health of children in the United States. Most parents today have never seen first-hand the devastating consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases have on a family or community. While these diseases are not common in the U.S., they persist around the world. It is important that we continue to protect our children with vaccines because outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases can and do occasionally occur in this country.

Vaccination is one of the best ways parents can protect infants, children, and teens from 16 potentially harmful diseases. Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious, may require hospitalization, or even be deadly - especially in infants and young children.

Click the age buttons within these tabs to learn more about:

- the importance of having your child fully vaccinated
- age-specific vaccine information
- the 16 vaccine preventable diseases that your child can be protected against before 19 years of age and the vaccines that prevent them.

Another good resource for vaccine information is [The Parents' Guide to Childhood Immunizations](#).




Birth

General Information

Infants and children need vaccines to protect them from harmful diseases. These diseases can have serious complications, especially for very young children, and even cause death.

Each year, CDC sets the US childhood immunization schedule based on recommendations from the [Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices](#). Your doctor can guide you in determining what vaccines your baby needs and when she needs them. By the time your baby is 2 years old, she should get vaccines that will protect her from 14 vaccine-preventable diseases. For many of these vaccines, more than one dose is needed to build up immunity and provide the best protection for your baby.

Find out what vaccines your baby needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

Vaccine Protection

For children younger than 19 years old, the recommended vaccines provide protection from 16 vaccine-preventable diseases, such as whooping cough (pertussis), measles, polio, and bacterial meningitis.

- For information about the vaccines and disease prevention, check out [How Vaccines Prevent Diseases](#).
- Learn more about the different [Vaccine-Preventable Diseases](#) and why it is important to protect children with vaccines.
- Another good resource for vaccine information is [The Parents' Guide to Childhood Immunizations](#).
- Read about creating a "wall of protection" around your baby by making sure you are up-to-date on your [adult vaccines](#).


Read [true stories](#) about families who battled these vaccine-preventable diseases.



Your Baby's First Shots

Before leaving the hospital or birthing center, your baby receives the first of 3 doses of the vaccine that protects against Hepatitis B. Hepatitis B virus can cause chronic swelling of the liver and possible lifelong complications. It's important to protect infants and young children from hepatitis B because they are more likely than adults to develop incurable chronic (long term) infection that can result in liver damage and liver cancer.

Learn why [Hepatitis B vaccine](#) is important to protect you and your baby.

Record your baby's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].

Take a short and funny look at some of the challenges of being a new parent with this video, [Welcome to Parenthood](#).

Babies' Immunity

Don't Infants Have Natural Immunity?

Babies receive some immunity (protection) from their mother during the last few weeks of pregnancy. These antibodies decrease over time, leaving the infant vulnerable to disease. By following the recommended immunization schedule, you are protecting your baby by providing immunity early in life, before they are likely to be exposed to potentially serious diseases and when they are most vulnerable to infections.

Learn about how vaccines and the body work together to fight diseases, check out [vaccines and your child's immune system](#).

See how [moms can pass along protection](#) against flu by getting a flu vaccine while they are pregnant.




1 to 2 months



General Information

Protect your baby by providing immunity early in life. Starting at 1 to 2 months of age, your baby receives the following vaccines to develop immunity from potentially harmful diseases:

- Hepatitis B (2nd dose)
- Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (pertussis)(DTaP)
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- Polio (IPV)
- Pneumococcal (PCV)
- Rotavirus (RV)

Get tips to prepare yourself and baby for your baby's [well-child visits](#).

Record your baby's vaccines, growth and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].


For tips on supporting your baby during immunization visits, check out [comforting holds for your child during vaccinations](#)  [156 KB, 1 page] and [Tips for a Less Stressful Shot Visit](#)  [168 KB, 2 pages].

Recommended Schedule

Vaccinate according to the recommended schedule

CDC's childhood immunization schedule is based on recommendations from the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). This schedule also is approved by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP) and is designed to protect infants and children by providing immunity early in life, before they are exposed to life-threatening diseases. Children are immunized starting at birth because they are susceptible to diseases at a young age, and the consequences of these diseases can be very serious, and even life-threatening, especially for infants and young children.



Find out how the [childhood immunization schedule](#) is set to protect your baby.

Find out what vaccines your baby needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].



More Disease Protection than Ever

Today, we can protect children against 14 diseases before 2 years of age with vaccines. The immunization schedule is designed to protect young children before they are likely to be exposed to the potentially serious diseases and when they are most vulnerable to serious infections. Even when multiple shots are given during a doctor's visit, these vaccines [do not overload the immune system](#).

For tips on supporting your baby during immunization visits, check out [comforting holds for your child during vaccinations](#)  [156 KB, 1 page] and [Tips for a Less Stressful Shot Visit](#)  [168 KB, 2 pages].

Get Help Paying for Vaccines

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) Program helps provide vaccines to children whose parents or guardians may not be able to afford them. The program offers vaccines at no cost for eligible children through VFC-enrolled doctors. Find out if your child qualifies. Vaccinating on time means healthier children, families, and communities.

Your baby may be eligible for free vaccines with the [Vaccines for Children \(VFC\) Program](#).





4 months


General Information

Protect your baby by providing immunity early in life. Stay on track with the recommended vaccine schedule. By 4 months of age, your baby receives the following vaccines to develop immunity from potentially harmful diseases:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (pertussis) (DTaP)
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- Polio (IPV)
- Pneumococcal (PCV)
- Rotavirus (RV)
- Hepatitis B (HepB)

Find out what vaccines your baby needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

Record your baby's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [532 KB, 2 pages].

Get tips to prepare yourself and baby for your baby's [well-child visit](#) .

Sick Babies and Shots

It's awful when your baby gets sick, but you can still protect your baby from other potentially harmful disease with vaccination. Usually babies can get vaccinated even if they have a mild illness like a cold, ear infection, mild fever, or diarrhea. Your child's doctor can tell you if it's okay for your child to get vaccinated if they have any of these symptoms.

Learn more about the different [Vaccine-Preventable Diseases](#) and why it is important to protect children with vaccines.

Learn about how vaccines and the body work together to fight diseases; check out [vaccines and your child's immune system](#).





Comforting Your Baby

Making the choice to vaccinate your child is vital for their health and well-being. Even so, getting shots can still be stressful for you and your little one. Fortunately, there are simple ways you can support your child before, during, and after shots.

During a vaccination

When your baby is getting shots, comfort your child by making eye contact and smiling. Distract your baby by talking softly or singing. After the shot is given, you can immediately soothe your child by breastfeeding or swaddling.

Remember to talk with your doctor about your baby's [developmental milestones](#).

For tips on supporting your baby during immunization visits, check out [comforting holds for your child during vaccinations](#)  [156 KB, 1 page] and [Tips for a Less Stressful Shot Visit](#)  [168 KB, 2 pages].

After a vaccination

After your baby gets a vaccination:

- Your baby may be extra fussy and develop a mild rash or fever
- Place a cool, damp cloth on the vaccinated area to help reduce redness and/or soreness at the injection site.
- Read the [Vaccine Information Sheet\(s\)](#) your doctor provided to learn about the possible side effects your child may experience.

Pay extra attention to your child for a few days after vaccination. If you see something that concerns you, call your child's doctor.

Risks of Falling Behind or Delaying

Vaccines can help protect infants and children by providing immunity early in life, before they are exposed to life-threatening diseases, like measles, whooping cough (pertussis), or polio. Children do not receive any known benefits from following schedules that spread out or delay vaccines. Delaying vaccines puts children at risk of becoming ill with vaccine-preventable diseases. By following the recommended schedule and fully immunizing your child by 2 years of age, you can protect your child and others from potentially serious disease.

If your child has fallen behind on immunizations, visit the [catch-up scheduler](#) to get them back on track.



Learn about the [risks and responsibilities if you choose not to vaccinate your child](#)

 [656 KB, 2 pages].

Find out how the [childhood immunization schedule](#) is set to protect your baby.

[Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

6 months


General Information

Protect your baby by providing immunity early in life. Stay on track with the recommended vaccine schedule. At 6 months of age, your baby receives the following vaccines to develop immunity from potentially harmful diseases:

- Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (pertussis)(DTaP)
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- Polio (IPV)
- Pneumococcal (PCV)
- Rotavirus (RV)
- Influenza (flu)

Children 6 months or older should receive a flu vaccination every flu season. Protect your child with flu vaccination, see [Children, the Flu, and the Flu Vaccine](#).

[Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

Record your baby's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].

Get tips to prepare yourself and baby for [well-child visits](#).



Possible Side Effects

Millions of children in the United States have been and continue to be safely vaccinated every year with no or only mild side effects. Some of these mild side effects include pain or swelling at the injection site, fussiness, or a mild fever.

Serious side effects following vaccination, such as severe allergic reaction, are very rare. If you see something that concerns you, call your child's doctor.

Learn more about the [Possible Vaccine Side Effects](#) and how the US ensures the safety of vaccines.

Flu Vaccine

Annual flu vaccination is the safest, most effective way to protect both children and adults against serious illness caused by flu. Flu vaccination is especially important for parents, caregivers, and other adults who live with or come in close contact with children at high risk of getting very sick if they get the flu. Annual flu vaccination is recommended for everyone 6 months of age or older.

Every year in the United States, even healthy children are hospitalized or unfortunately, die from flu complications. So it's very important for families to get vaccinated against flu as soon as vaccine is available in your community.

[Learn how you can protect your child with flu vaccination.](#)


[Watch a 1 minute video](#) about the importance of flu vaccination for children.



Vaccines and Child Care Requirements

The immunizations that are required for children to enroll and attend childcare and school vary by state. States and U.S. territories enact laws or regulations that require children to receive certain vaccines before they enter child care facilities and/or school (kindergarten/first grade, middle school, high school, college).

Find out your state vaccination requirements for [child care and schools](#).

Record your child's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].

Get tips on [keeping and finding vaccine records for your children](#).

Find out what vaccines your baby needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#) .





7 to 11 months

General Information

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends a well-child visit at 9 months. Ask your doctor's office about scheduling this visit. There are usually no vaccinations scheduled between 7 and 11 months of age. However, if your baby has missed an earlier vaccination, now is a good time to “catch up”.

Get tips to prepare yourself and baby for your baby's [well-child visit](#).

Record your baby's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].


Find out what vaccines your baby needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

How Vaccines Prevent Diseases

The diseases that vaccines prevent can be dangerous, or even deadly. Vaccines reduce the risk of infection by working with the body's natural defenses to help it safely develop immunity to disease.

When germs, such as bacteria or viruses, invade the body, they attack and multiply. This invasion is called an infection, and the infection is what causes illness. The immune system then has to fight the infection. Once it fights off the infection, the body is left with a supply of cells that help recognize and fight that disease in the future.


Vaccines help develop immunity by imitating an infection, but this "imitation" infection does not cause illness. It does, however, cause the immune system to develop the same response as it does to a real infection so the body can recognize and fight the vaccine-preventable disease in the future. Sometimes, after getting a vaccine, the imitation infection can cause minor symptoms, such as fever. Such minor symptoms are normal and should be expected as the body builds immunity.

Read more about how vaccines and the body work together to fight disease in the [Parents Guide](#)  [1.83 MB, 6 pages] to Childhood Immunizations.



Track Your Baby's Vaccinations

It's important to maintain an up-to-date vaccination record so that you know what vaccines your baby received and what vaccines they need next to continue developing immunity against potentially harmful diseases. Ask your doctor or clinic to give you an immunization record form to track your child's vaccines. Keep it safe and up-to-date. Bring the form with you for each of your child's doctor visits, and ask the doctor to record the date and dose for each vaccine. That way, you can be sure that the immunization information is current and correct.

Record your baby's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].

[Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

Get tips on how to keep and find your child's [vaccine records](#).

Find out your state vaccination requirements for [childcare and schools](#).

Missed Vaccinations

Help your baby build immunity against potentially harmful diseases by staying on track with the recommended vaccine schedule. If your baby has missed any shots, work with your baby's doctor or health clinic to get back on track. It's not too late to catch-up. CDC has an [online tool](#) that can help you create a personalized schedule for your child to follow. This tool will help your baby "catch up" with the recommended childhood vaccination schedule and ensure your baby child is fully protected from 14 vaccine-preventable diseases by 2 years of age.



12 to 23 months


General Information


By following the recommended schedule and fully immunizing your child by 2 years of age, your child should be protected against 14 vaccine preventable diseases. Between 12 and 23 months of age, your child receives the following vaccines to continue developing immunity from potentially harmful diseases:

- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Diphtheria, tetanus, and whooping cough (pertussis) (DTaP)
- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib)
- Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR)
- Polio (IPV) (Between 6 through 18 months)
- Pneumococcal (PCV)
- Hepatitis A (HepA)
- Hepatitis B (HepB)

If your child missed a vaccine, this is a good time to catch-up. Your child may receive additional vaccine doses to fully protect against up to 14 diseases by 2 years of age.

The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends a well child visit at 12 months, 15 months, and 18 months. Recommended vaccines are usually given at these visits. Get tips to prepare yourself and baby before your child's [well-child visit](#).

Find out what vaccines your baby needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

Record your child's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].



Multiple Doses Are Needed for Best Protection


Every dose of a vaccine is important for best protection against infectious diseases that are threats today and can be especially serious for infants and very young children.

Depending on the vaccine, more than one dose is needed to:

- build high enough immunity to prevent disease
- boost immunity that weakens over time
- make sure people who did not get immunity from a first dose are protected
- protect against germs that change over time (like flu)

For more information see, [simultaneous and combination vaccines](#).

Read more about [how vaccines and the body work together to fight disease](#).


Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

Combination Vaccines

Combination vaccines protect your child against more than one disease with a single shot. They reduce the number of shots and office visits your child would need, which not only saves you time and money, but also is easier on your child, especially if you are concerned about your child receiving multiple shots and having pain after the injection.

Some common combination vaccines that are currently used are: DTaP (diphtheria-tetanus-pertussis) and MMR (measles-mumps-rubella).

For more information see, [simultaneous and combination vaccines](#).

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].



MMR Vaccine Safety

The MMR vaccine has a long record of safety. Serious risks of MMR vaccine are rare. There have been many large and reliable studies of MMR vaccine in the U.S. and other countries. None has found a link between autism and the MMR vaccine.

There are a couple of reasons people believe autism is linked to vaccination. The first is because sometimes signs of autism appear around the age the MMR vaccine is given. If a child is diagnosed shortly after getting vaccinations, this may seem like cause and effect.

Another reason that some people think that autism is linked to the MMR vaccine is because of a study published in 1998 from the United Kingdom. One of the authors claimed that the MMR vaccine could contribute to the development of autism. That study got a lot of attention in the news. Since 1998, 10 out of 13 of the study's authors have withdrawn their support of the study, and the journal has retracted it.

See CDC's [statement](#) about autism.

Learn more about [making informed vaccine decisions](#).



2 to 3 years

General Information


By following the recommended schedule and fully immunizing your child by 2 years of age, your child should be protected against 14 vaccine preventable diseases. If your child missed a vaccine, this is a good time to catch-up or receive additional vaccine doses to maintain full protection.

Between 2 and 3 years of age, your child should visit the doctor once a year for check-ups.

Children should receive flu vaccination every flu season. This is also a great age to teach your child about [hand hygiene](#) and how it helps to stop the spread of germs.

Protect your child against the flu with the vaccine, check out [Children, the Flu, and the Flu Vaccine](#).

Get tips to prepare yourself and your child for their [well-child visit](#).

Record your child's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].



Keep Your Child Up-to-Date

Every dose of a vaccine is important for best protection against infectious diseases that are threats today and can be especially serious for infants and very young children. Help your child maintain immunity against potentially harmful diseases by staying on track with the recommended vaccine schedule.

If your child has missed or skipped one or more of the recommended vaccinations, you can download the [Catch-up Immunization Scheduler](#), an online tool that can help you quickly determine the vaccines a child age 6 years and younger needs. You only need to enter your child's date of birth.


Risks of Delaying

Vaccines can help protect infants and children by providing immunity early in life, before they are exposed to life-threatening diseases, like measles, whooping cough (pertussis), or polio. Children do not receive any known benefits from following schedules that spread out or delay vaccines. Delaying vaccines puts children at risk of becoming ill with preventable diseases. By following the recommended schedule and fully immunizing your child by 2 years of age, you can protect your child and others from potentially serious disease.

Learn about the [risks and responsibilities if you choose not to vaccinate your child](#)

 [655 KB, 2 pages].

Find out how the childhood [immunization schedule is set](#) to protect your child

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].



Preschool Vaccination


As you help your kids get ready for school, make sure they're fully vaccinated. Typically, your child needs a certificate of immunization to enroll in a new school. Your doctor's office or health clinic should be able to give you a record.

Your state may also require children entering school to be vaccinated against certain diseases, such as pertussis. If you're unsure of your state's school requirements, check with your child's doctor, your child's school, or your health department.

Making sure that children of all ages receive all their vaccinations on time is one of the most important things parents can do to ensure their children's long-term health – as well as the health of friends, classmates, and others in the community.

Get tips on how to keep and find your child's [vaccine records](#).

Find out your state vaccination requirements for [child care and schools](#).

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].



4 to 6 years


General Information

By following the recommended schedule and fully immunizing your child on time, you helped protect your child against 14 vaccine preventable diseases. If your child missed a vaccine, now is a good time for your child to catch-up. During this time, your child will also receive additional vaccine doses needed for the best protection.

Between 4 through 6 years of age, your child should visit the doctor once a year for check-ups. During this time, your child receives the following vaccines:

- Diphtheria, tetanus and whooping cough (pertussis) (DTaP)
- Polio (IPV)
- Measles, Mumps and Rubella (MMR)
- Chickenpox (Varicella)
- Influenza (flu) every year

Get tips to prepare yourself and child for your [well-child visit](#).

Record your child's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].

Vaccines before School


As you help your kids get ready for school, make sure they're fully vaccinated. Typically, your child needs a certificate of immunization to enroll in a new school. Your doctor's office or health clinic should be able to give you a record.

Your state may also require children entering school to be vaccinated against certain diseases, such as pertussis. If you're unsure of your state's school requirements, check with your child's doctor, your child's school, or your health department.

Making sure that children of all ages receive all their vaccinations on time is one of the most important things parents can do to ensure their children's long-term health – as well as the health of friends, classmates, and others in the community.

Get tips on how to keep and find your child's [vaccine records](#).

Find out your state vaccination requirements for [child care and schools](#).

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].



Multiple Doses Are Needed for Best Protection

Between 4 and 6 years, it is important that your child will receive additional doses of vaccines to keep them protected. These booster doses of the vaccines they received earlier in life help them maintain the best protection against vaccine-preventable diseases.


Every dose of a vaccine is important because they all protect against infectious diseases that are threats today and can be especially serious for infants and very young children.

Depending on the vaccine, more than one dose is needed to:

- build high enough immunity to prevent disease
- boost immunity that weakens over time
- make sure people who did not get immunity from a first dose are protected
- protect against germs that change over time (like flu)

Read about the benefits of [simultaneous and combination vaccines](#).

Learn more about [how vaccines work](#) to help the body build immunity.

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth through 6 Years Old](#)  [314 KB, 2 pages].

Missed Vaccinations

If your child has missed any shots, work with your child's doctor or health clinic to get back on track; there's no need to start over. CDC has an [online tool](#) that can help you create a personalized schedule to follow so you can correctly “catch up” with the recommended childhood vaccination schedule.



7 to 10 years

General Information


By following the recommended schedule and fully immunizing your child on time, you helped protect your child against 14 vaccine preventable diseases. If your child missed a vaccine, now is a good time for your child to catch-up. During this time, your child may also receive additional vaccine doses needed for the best protection.


If you have a child who is 7-10 years old and has not received any or all of the DTaP vaccine series, or, if you don't know if your child has received these shots, your child needs a single dose of Tdap vaccine at this time. Tdap vaccine is combination vaccine that is routinely recommended at age 11 or 12 to protect against Tetanus, Diphtheria and Pertussis.

Between 7 and 10 years of age, your child should visit the doctor once a year for check-ups. Check with your doctor about catching up on any missed vaccinations. Your doctor may recommend the following vaccinations if your child has certain medical risks:

- Hepatitis A (HepA)
- Meningococcal (MCV)
- Pneumococcal (PCV)

During this time, your child receives the annual influenza (flu) vaccine.

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [adolescent immunization schedule](#)  [317 KB, 2 pages].


Record your child's vaccines, growth, and developmental milestones using the [Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [331 KB, 2 pages].



Annual Flu Protection

The flu vaccine is recommended every year for children older than 6 months of age because there are many different flu viruses, and they change constantly. For each season, a new flu vaccine is produced that is designed to protect against the three main flu viruses that are expected to cause the most illness during the upcoming season. Another reason to get vaccinated every year is that the body's immunity from the vaccine decreases after a year, so your body needs a new vaccine to renew immunity.

Protect your child against the flu with the vaccine, check out [Children, the Flu, and the Flu Vaccine](#).


Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [adolescent immunization schedule Well Child Visit Tracker](#)  [3171 KB, 2 pages].

Travel and Vaccinations

Many vaccine-preventable diseases that are rare in the United States are still common in other parts of the world. Depending on where you plan to travel with your children, you may need additional vaccinations.

Vaccinating children for travel requires careful evaluation. Whenever possible, children should receive all vaccinations according to the recommended schedule. Talk with your doctor to see what vaccines are recommended for your child before you travel.

Check out the [vaccines your child needs before traveling](#).

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [adolescent immunization schedule](#)  [317 KB, 2 pages].



Vaccine Information for Kids

Help your kids learn about how their body and immune system work together to fight infectious diseases. Kids can learn how vaccines help protect them, their friends, and family. They can also follow CDC Disease Detectives as they track down infectious diseases like SARS.

Join the Immune Platoon on CDC's [Kid Friendly Site](#).



11 to 12 years

General Information

General Information

Between 11 and 12 years of age, your child should visit the doctor once a year for check-ups. As children get older, protection provided by some childhood vaccines can begin to wear off. Older kids also need to be protected against additional diseases they may encounter now or in the future. Therefore, during this time, your child receives the following vaccines:

- Tetanus, diphtheria, and whooping cough (pertussis) (Tdap)
- Meningococcal (MCV) (1st dose)
- Human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccine (3 doses)
- Influenza (flu) every year

Some missed vaccines can be "caught up" during this time to help protect your preteen.

- [Catch-up Immunization Scheduler](#)
- [Vaccines for preteens and teens](#)

More about HPV Vaccine

HPV vaccination is recommended for both girls AND boys at age 11 or 12 years. HPV vaccination helps protect girls from getting cervical cancer and anal cancer. HPV vaccination helps protect boys from getting anal cancer. One of the HPV vaccines also protects both girls and boys from getting genital warts—this is the only HPV vaccine that can be given to boys.

Learn more about the [HPV Vaccine](#).


Learn more about [HPV and cancer](#).



Preteens and Tdap Vaccine

Even though your pre-teen had their childhood DTaP vaccines, they still need the Tdap vaccine as a booster dose. The protection provided to babies and young children by the DTaP vaccine against tetanus, diphtheria and pertussis wears off as children get older. Getting this booster not only protects your vaccinated preteen, but also those around them, such as infants who are too young to be vaccinated.


Find more information about [Tdap versus DTaP](#).

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [adolescent immunization schedule](#)  [317 KB, 2 pages].

Side Effects and Benefits

Vaccine Side Effects and Benefits

Preteens may experience mild side effects, such as redness and soreness where they get the injection (in the arm). Some people, including preteens and teens, might faint after getting a shot. Sitting or lying down for about 15 minutes after a vaccination can help prevent fainting and any injuries related to fainting that may occur. Most side effects are very minor especially compared with the serious diseases that these vaccines prevent. Without vaccines, your child may be at risk for getting seriously ill and suffering pain, disability, and even premature death.

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when with the [adolescent immunization schedule](#)  [317 KB, 2 pages].



13 to 18 years

General Information

Between 13 and 18 years of age, your child should visit the doctor once a year for check-ups. During this time, your child receives the following vaccines:

- Meningococcal (MCV) (2nd dose at 16 years)
- Influenza (flu) every year

If your child has not yet started or completed the HPV vaccine series, they should get those shots now. If your child has not received a one-time dose of Tdap, they should get that shot as soon as possible.

Find out what vaccines your child needs and when they need them with the [adolescent immunization schedule](#). You can also use this schedule to see if your teen needs any additional vaccinations before entering college.

Teens and the Meningococcal Conjugate Vaccine (MCV4)

Teens and young adults ages 16 through 21 years old have the highest rates of meningococcal disease. Meningococcal bacteria can cause severe disease, including meningitis (infection of the fluid and lining around the brain) and sepsis (an infection of the bloodstream), resulting in permanent disabilities and even death.

All preteens should be vaccinated with the first dose of meningococcal conjugate vaccine (MCV4) at age 11 or 12 years. A booster dose should be given at age 16 years. For teens 16 and older who have never received any doses of MCV4, they should get a single dose as soon as possible, especially before starting college or the military.

Learn more about the [meningococcal conjugate vaccine](#).



Teens Traveling Abroad

Is Your Teen Traveling?

Does your teen have a cultural or educational opportunity for travel outside the U.S.? Be sure to check [CDC's Travelers' Health Vaccinations](#) website and to talk to your child's doctor about routine and travel-related vaccines.