

Immunization FAQs

What do vaccines do?

- Vaccines work by preparing the body to fight illness.
- Each vaccine contains either a dead or a weakened germ that causes a particular disease.
- Immunization is one of the best ways you can protect yourself and your children against infectious disease.

Why Immunize?

- Diseases like polio and diphtheria are becoming very rare in the United States, largely because we vaccinate against them.
- Even if there are only a few cases of a disease that has a vaccine, if we take away the protection of a vaccine, more and more people will become infected and spread disease to others, and it won't take long to undo the progress by vaccinating over the years.

Are vaccines safe?

- Yes. Every vaccine is tested and must meet strict safety standards set by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). This can take up to 10 years.
- Even after being opened to the public, every immunization is monitored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC).
- There is absolutely no link between vaccines and autism.
 - Some people have concerns that ASD might be linked to the vaccines children receive, but studies show that there is no link between receiving vaccines and developing ASD.
- In 2001, and again in 2004, the Institute of Medicine (IOM) Immunization Safety Review Committee – an independent body of experts who have no conflict of interest with pharmaceutical companies or organizations that make vaccine recommendations – studied a possible measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) link to autism and found **no evidence** supporting such a connection.
- A panel of experts brought together by the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) reached the same conclusion.
- Most of the authors of the original study linking MMR to autism have retracted their support of the study.

Why so many vaccines at one time?

- Babies are exposed to many more germs every day than what they get in the vaccines.
- Although infants do receive many shots, they are given at a time when they are most at risk of illness and serious complications from the disease.
- Vaccines schedules are well-studied to make sure that it is safe to give them all at once.

Can I spread out my child's immunizations, so they're not receiving so many in a short period of time?

- The recommended schedule is designed to protect children when they are most vulnerable to the diseases vaccines prevent.
- Non-standard schedules that spread out vaccines, or start when a child is older, do not provide protection against serious illness when infants and young children are most at risk for the diseases.

Can immunizations cause a bad reaction?

The most common reactions to vaccines are minor, and include:

- Redness, swelling and soreness at the site where the shot was given.
- Fever

For Vaccine Schedules and Guidelines visit:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html>

Frequently asked questions gathered from:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/index.html>