



IMMUNIZATION RESOURCES FOR PARENTS AND PARENTS-TO-BE

2021



**VACCINATE
YOUR FAMILY**



Dear Parent or Parent-to-Be,

This booklet contains helpful information on vaccines (shots) for you and your family.

Vaccines save lives. They protect against serious diseases like COVID-19, measles, flu, whooping cough and chickenpox. Vaccinating children against certain diseases is one important way to help them stay healthy.

WIC's mission is to be a partner with other services that are key to childhood and family wellbeing, such as immunizations. **You are encouraged to bring your child's shot record to your WIC appointments so that WIC staff can review that record and make sure that your child is up to date on all their vaccines. If not, WIC staff will suggest a place you can go to get your child the vaccines they need.**

Most health insurance plans cover the cost of vaccines, but you may want to check with your insurance provider before going to the doctor. **If your child does not have health insurance, are Medicaid-eligible, or are *underinsured*, they may be able to receive free vaccines at their doctor's office or a health center (FQHC or RHC) through the federal Vaccines for Children program (VFC). For more information on VFC and how to pay for your family's vaccines, visit vaccinateyourfamily.org/paying-for-vax**

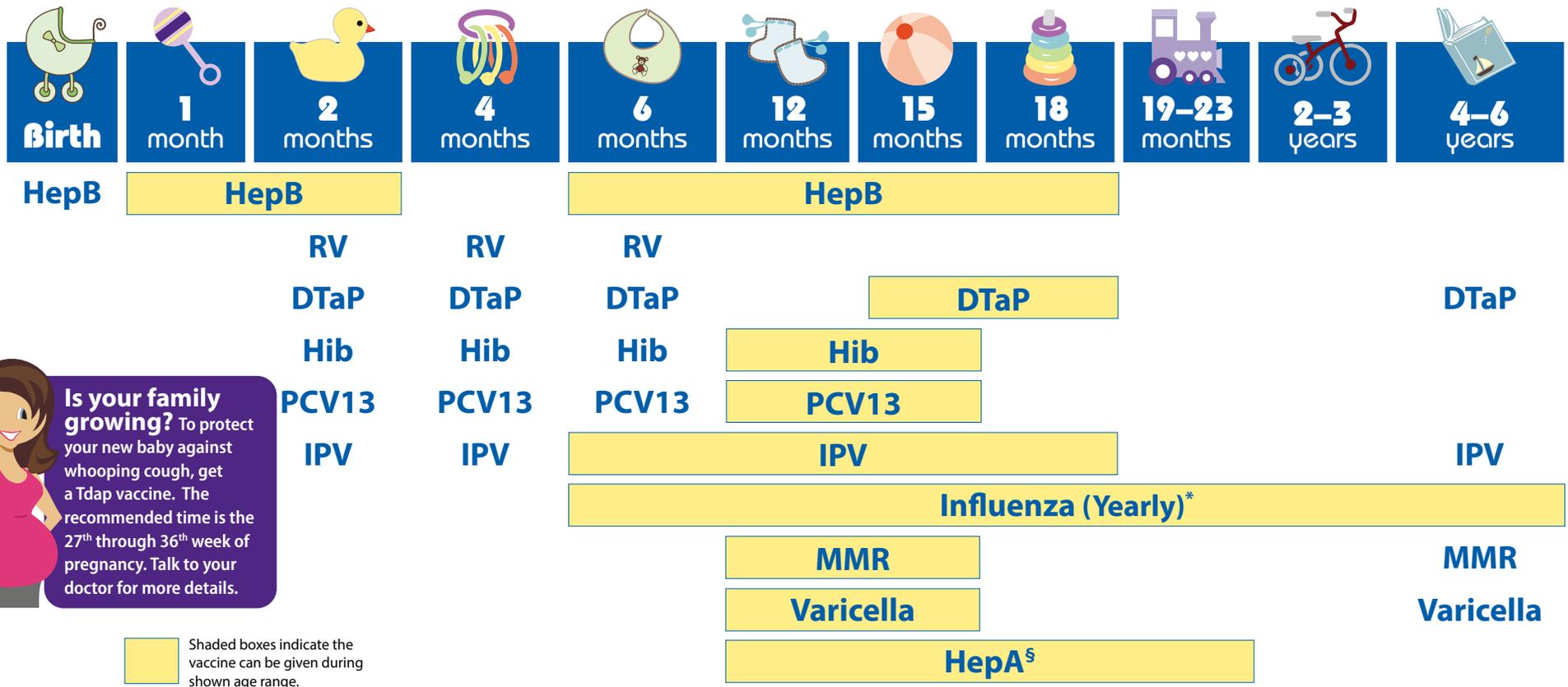
Adults, especially pregnant people, need vaccines too. By getting yourself vaccinated while pregnant you are helping to protect BOTH you and your baby from serious diseases like flu, whooping cough and COVID-19.

For more information and for answers to questions you may have about vaccines for your family, please visit vaccinateyourfamily.org.



This booklet was created by Vaccinate Your Family and is supported through funding provided by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

2021 Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth Through 6 Years Old



Is your family growing? To protect your new baby against whooping cough, get a Tdap vaccine. The recommended time is the 27th through 36th week of pregnancy. Talk to your doctor for more details.

Shaded boxes indicate the vaccine can be given during shown age range.

NOTE:

If your child misses a shot, you don't need to start over. Just go back to your child's doctor for the next shot. Talk with your child's doctor if you have questions about vaccines.

FOOTNOTES:

- * Two doses given at least four weeks apart are recommended for children age 6 months through 8 years of age who are getting an influenza (flu) vaccine for the first time and for some other children in this age group.
 - § Two doses of HepA vaccine are needed for lasting protection. The first dose of HepA vaccine should be given between 12 months and 23 months of age. The second dose should be given 6 months after the first dose. All children and adolescents over 24 months of age who have not been vaccinated should also receive 2 doses of HepA vaccine.
- If your child has any medical conditions that put him at risk for infection or is traveling outside the United States, talk to your child's doctor about additional vaccines that he or she may need.*

See back page for more information on vaccine-preventable diseases and the vaccines that prevent them.



For more information, call toll-free
1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
or visit
www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents



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Vaccine-Preventable Diseases and the Vaccines that Prevent Them

Disease	Vaccine	Disease spread by	Disease symptoms	Disease complications
Chickenpox	Varicella vaccine protects against chickenpox.	Air, direct contact	Rash, tiredness, headache, fever	Infected blisters, bleeding disorders, encephalitis (brain swelling), pneumonia (infection in the lungs)
Diphtheria	DTaP* vaccine protects against diphtheria.	Air, direct contact	Sore throat, mild fever, weakness, swollen glands in neck	Swelling of the heart muscle, heart failure, coma, paralysis, death
Hib	Hib vaccine protects against <i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b.	Air, direct contact	May be no symptoms unless bacteria enter the blood	Meningitis (infection of the covering around the brain and spinal cord), intellectual disability, epiglottitis (life-threatening infection that can block the windpipe and lead to serious breathing problems), pneumonia (infection in the lungs), death
Hepatitis A	HepA vaccine protects against hepatitis A.	Direct contact, contaminated food or water	May be no symptoms, fever, stomach pain, loss of appetite, fatigue, vomiting, jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes), dark urine	Liver failure, arthralgia (joint pain), kidney, pancreatic and blood disorders
Hepatitis B	HepB vaccine protects against hepatitis B.	Contact with blood or body fluids	May be no symptoms, fever, headache, weakness, vomiting, jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes), joint pain	Chronic liver infection, liver failure, liver cancer
Influenza (Flu)	Flu vaccine protects against influenza.	Air, direct contact	Fever, muscle pain, sore throat, cough, extreme fatigue	Pneumonia (infection in the lungs)
Measles	MMR** vaccine protects against measles.	Air, direct contact	Rash, fever, cough, runny nose, pink eye	Encephalitis (brain swelling), pneumonia (infection in the lungs), death
Mumps	MMR** vaccine protects against mumps.	Air, direct contact	Swollen salivary glands (under the jaw), fever, headache, tiredness, muscle pain	Meningitis (infection of the covering around the brain and spinal cord), encephalitis (brain swelling), inflammation of testicles or ovaries, deafness
Pertussis	DTaP* vaccine protects against pertussis (whooping cough).	Air, direct contact	Severe cough, runny nose, apnea (a pause in breathing in infants)	Pneumonia (infection in the lungs), death
Polio	IPV vaccine protects against polio.	Air, direct contact, through the mouth	May be no symptoms, sore throat, fever, nausea, headache	Paralysis, death
Pneumococcal	PCV13 vaccine protects against pneumococcus.	Air, direct contact	May be no symptoms, pneumonia (infection in the lungs)	Bacteremia (blood infection), meningitis (infection of the covering around the brain and spinal cord), death
Rotavirus	RV vaccine protects against rotavirus.	Through the mouth	Diarrhea, fever, vomiting	Severe diarrhea, dehydration
Rubella	MMR** vaccine protects against rubella.	Air, direct contact	Sometimes rash, fever, swollen lymph nodes	Very serious in pregnant women—can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, birth defects
Tetanus	DTaP* vaccine protects against tetanus.	Exposure through cuts in skin	Stiffness in neck and abdominal muscles, difficulty swallowing, muscle spasms, fever	Broken bones, breathing difficulty, death

* DTaP combines protection against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis.

** MMR combines protection against measles, mumps, and rubella.

Immunizations and Developmental Milestones for Your Child from Birth Through 6 Years Old

Child's Name _____

Birth Date _____

		Birth	1 MONTH	2 MONTHS	4 MONTHS	6 MONTHS
Recommended Immunizations	Hepatitis B	<input type="radio"/> HepB	<input type="radio"/> HepB ¹			<input type="radio"/> HepB
	Rotavirus			<input type="radio"/> RV	<input type="radio"/> RV	<input type="radio"/> RV ²
	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis			<input type="radio"/> DTaP	<input type="radio"/> DTaP	<input type="radio"/> DTaP
	<i>Haemophilus influenzae</i> type b			<input type="radio"/> Hib	<input type="radio"/> Hib	<input type="radio"/> Hib
	Pneumococcal			<input type="radio"/> PCV	<input type="radio"/> PCV	<input type="radio"/> PCV
	Inactivated Poliovirus			<input type="radio"/> IPV	<input type="radio"/> IPV	<input type="radio"/> IPV
	Influenza (Flu)					<input type="radio"/> Influenza, first dose ³ <input type="radio"/> second dose
Milestones*	<p>Milestones should be achieved by the age indicated.</p> <p>Talk to your child's doctor about age-appropriate milestones if your child was born prematurely.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Recognizes caregiver's voice <input type="radio"/> Turns head toward breast or bottle <input type="radio"/> Communicates through body language, fussing or crying, alert and engaged <input type="radio"/> Startles to loud sounds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Starts to smile <input type="radio"/> Raises head when on tummy <input type="radio"/> Calms down when rocked, cradled or sung to <input type="radio"/> Pays attention to faces 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Begins to smile at people <input type="radio"/> Coos, makes gurgling sounds <input type="radio"/> Begins to follow things with eyes <input type="radio"/> Can hold head up 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Babbles with expression <input type="radio"/> Likes to play with people <input type="radio"/> Reaches for toy with one hand <input type="radio"/> Brings hands to mouth <input type="radio"/> Responds to affection <input type="radio"/> Holds head steady, unsupported 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Knows familiar faces <input type="radio"/> Responds to own name <input type="radio"/> Brings things to mouth <input type="radio"/> Rolls over in both directions <input type="radio"/> Strings vowels together when babbling ("ah", "eh", "oh") 	
Growth		_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
		WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE
		_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	
	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	
	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	

continues on back page

 Shaded boxes indicate the vaccine can be given during shown age range.

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

¹ The second dose of HepB may be given either at the 1 month or 2 month visit.

² A third dose of rotavirus vaccine is only needed for RotaTeq.

³ Two doses given at least four weeks apart are recommended for children aged 6 months through 8 years of age who are getting a flu vaccine for the first time and for some other children in this age group.

* Milestones adapted from *Caring for your baby and young child: Birth to age 5*, Fifth Edition, edited by Steven Shelov and Tanya Remer Altmann © 1991, 1993, 1998, 2004, 2009 by the American Academy of Pediatrics and *Bright Futures: Guidelines for health supervision of infants, children, and adolescents*, Third Edition, edited by Joseph Hagan, Jr., Judith S. Shaw, and Paula M. Duncan, 2008, Elk Grove Village, IL: American Academy of Pediatrics.

This is not an exhaustive list of milestones from 0-6 years. See more at www.cdc.gov/milestones

If your child has any medical conditions that put him at risk for infections or is traveling outside the United States, talk to your child's doctor about additional vaccines that he may need.



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Immunizations and Developmental Milestones for Your Child from Birth Through 6 Years Old

Child's Name _____

Birth Date _____

		12 MONTHS	15 MONTHS	18 MONTHS	19 23 MONTHS	2-3 YEARS	4-6 YEARS
Recommended Immunizations	Hepatitis B	<input type="radio"/> HepB (Final dose administered between 6 and 18 months)					
	Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis		<input type="radio"/> DTaP				<input type="radio"/> DTaP
	Haemophilus influenzae type b	<input type="radio"/> Hib					
	Pneumococcal	<input type="radio"/> PCV					
	Inactivated Poliovirus	<input type="radio"/> IPV (Third dose administered between 6 and 18 months)					<input type="radio"/> IPV
	Influenza (Flu)	<input type="radio"/> Influenza , first dose ² <input type="radio"/> second dose (if needed)				Age 2 3 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Influenza , first dose ² <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> second dose (if needed)	Age 4 5 6 <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Influenza , first dose ² <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> second dose (if needed)
	Measles, Mumps, Rubella	<input type="radio"/> MMR					<input type="radio"/> MMR
	Varicella	<input type="radio"/> Varicella					<input type="radio"/> Varicella
Hepatitis A	<input type="radio"/> <input type="radio"/> Hep A³						
Milestones*	Milestones should be achieved by the age indicated. Talk to your child's doctor about age-appropriate milestones if your child was born prematurely.	<input type="radio"/> Cries when mom or dad leaves <input type="radio"/> Says "mama" and "dada" <input type="radio"/> Copies gestures (for example, waves "bye bye") <input type="radio"/> May stand alone <input type="radio"/> Looks at right picture or thing when named	<input type="radio"/> Imitates what you are doing <input type="radio"/> Drinks from a cup <input type="radio"/> Scribbles on his own <input type="radio"/> Walks well <input type="radio"/> Says a couple of words other than "mama" and "dada"	<input type="radio"/> Points to show others something interesting <input type="radio"/> Says several single words <input type="radio"/> Points to one body part <input type="radio"/> May walk up steps and run	<input type="radio"/> Plays mainly beside other children <input type="radio"/> Follows two-step commands <input type="radio"/> Plays simple make-believe games <input type="radio"/> Throws ball overhand	<input type="radio"/> Can name most familiar things <input type="radio"/> Shows affection for friends without prompting <input type="radio"/> Turns book pages one at a time <input type="radio"/> Kicks a ball	<input type="radio"/> Speaks very clearly <input type="radio"/> Tells stories <input type="radio"/> Can print some letters or numbers <input type="radio"/> Hops; may be able to skip <input type="radio"/> Enjoys playing with other children
	Growth	At each well child visit, enter date, length, weight, and percentile information to keep track of your child's progress.	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT / PERCENTILE	WEIGHT
		LENGTH / PERCENTILE	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	LENGTH / PERCENTILE	HEIGHT	HEIGHT
		HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	HEAD CIRCUMFERENCE	BMI	BMI

 Shaded boxes indicate the vaccine can be given during shown age range.

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

VISIT DATE

² Two doses given at least four weeks apart are recommended for children aged 6 months through 8 years of age who are getting a flu vaccine for the first time and for some other children in this age group.

³ Two doses of HepA vaccine are needed for lasting protection. The first dose of HepA vaccine should be given between 12 months and 23 months of age. The second dose should be given 6 months after the first dose. HepA vaccination may be given to any child 12 months and older to protect against HepA. Children and adolescents who did not receive the HepA vaccine and are at high-risk, should be vaccinated against HepA.

* Milestones adapted from AAP *Bright Futures: Guidelines for Health Supervision of Infants, Children, and Adolescents* Third Edition.

This is not an exhaustive list of milestones from 0-6 years. See more at www.cdc.gov/Milestones and download the Milestone Tracker App at www.cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker

If your child has any medical conditions that put him at risk for infections or is traveling outside the United States, talk to your child's doctor about additional vaccines that he may need.



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Talk to your child’s doctor or nurse about the vaccines recommended for their age. COVID-19 vaccination is recommended for some adolescents.

	Flu Influenza	Tdap Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis	HPV Human papillomavirus	Meningococcal		Pneumococcal	Hepatitis B	Hepatitis A	Polio	MMR Measles, mumps, rubella	Chickenpox Varicella
				MenACWY	MenB						
7-8 Years	Green	Orange		Orange		Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
9-10 Years	Green	Orange	Green, Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
11-12 Years	Green	Green, Orange	Green, Orange	Green, Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
13-15 Years	Green	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange
16-18 Years	Green	Orange	Orange	Green, Orange	Orange, Blue	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange	Orange

More information:

Everyone 6 months and older should get a flu vaccine every year.

All 11- through 12-year olds should get one shot of Tdap.

All 11- through 12-year olds should get a 2-shot series of HPV vaccine. A 3-shot series is needed for those with weakened immune systems and those who start the series at 15 years or older.

All 11- through 12-year olds should get one shot of meningococcal conjugate (MenACWY). A booster shot is recommended at age 16.

Teens 16–18 years old **may** be vaccinated with a serogroup B meningococcal (MenB) vaccine.

 These shaded boxes indicate when the vaccine is recommended for all children unless your doctor tells you that your child cannot safely receive the vaccine.

 These shaded boxes indicate the vaccine should be given if a child is catching up on missed vaccines.

 These shaded boxes indicate the vaccine is recommended for children with certain health or lifestyle conditions that put them at an increased risk for serious diseases. See vaccine-specific recommendations at www.cdc.gov/vaccines/hcp/acip-recs/.

 This shaded box indicates children not at increased risk may get the vaccine if they wish after speaking to a provider.



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Vaccine-Preventable Diseases and the Vaccines that Prevent Them

Disease	Vaccine	Disease spread by	Disease symptoms	Disease complications
Chickenpox	Varicella vaccine protects against chickenpox.	Air, direct contact	Rash, tiredness, headache, fever	Infected blisters, bleeding disorders, encephalitis (brain swelling), pneumonia (infection in the lungs)
Diphtheria	Tdap* and Td** vaccines protect against diphtheria.	Air, direct contact	Sore throat, mild fever, weakness, swollen glands in neck	Swelling of the heart muscle, heart failure, coma, paralysis, death
Hepatitis A	HepA vaccine protects against hepatitis A.	Direct contact, contaminated food or water	May be no symptoms, fever, stomach pain, loss of appetite, fatigue, vomiting, jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes), dark urine	Liver failure, arthralgia (joint pain), kidney, pancreatic and blood disorders
Hepatitis B	HepB vaccine protects against hepatitis B.	Contact with blood or body fluids	May be no symptoms, fever, headache, weakness, vomiting, jaundice (yellowing of skin and eyes), joint pain	Chronic liver infection, liver failure, liver cancer
Human Papillomavirus	HPV vaccine protects against human papillomavirus.	Direct skin contact	May be no symptoms, genital warts	Cervical, vaginal, vulvar, penile, anal, oropharyngeal cancers
Influenza (Flu)	Flu vaccine protects against influenza.	Air, direct contact	Fever, muscle pain, sore throat, cough, extreme fatigue	Pneumonia (infection in the lungs)
Measles	MMR*** vaccine protects against measles.	Air, direct contact	Rash, fever, cough, runny nose, pink eye	Encephalitis (brain swelling), pneumonia (infection in the lungs), death
Meningococcal Disease	MenACWY and MenB vaccines protect against meningococcal disease.	Air, direct contact	Sudden onset of fever, headache, and stiff neck, dark purple rash	Loss of limb, deafness, nervous system disorders, developmental disabilities, seizure disorder, stroke, death
Mumps	MMR*** vaccine protects against mumps.	Air, direct contact	Swollen salivary glands (under the jaw), fever, headache, tiredness, muscle pain	Meningitis (infection of the covering around the brain and spinal cord), encephalitis (brain swelling), inflammation of testicles or ovaries, deafness
Pertussis	Tdap* vaccine protects against pertussis.	Air, direct contact	Severe cough, runny nose, apnea (a pause in breathing in infants)	Pneumonia (infection in the lungs), death
Pneumococcal Disease	Pneumococcal vaccine protects against pneumococcal disease.	Air, direct contact	May be no symptoms, pneumonia (infection in the lungs)	Bacteremia (blood infection), meningitis (infection of the covering around the brain and spinal cord), death
Polio	Polio vaccine protects against polio.	Air, direct contact, through the mouth	May be no symptoms, sore throat, fever, nausea, headache	Paralysis, death
Rubella	MMR*** vaccine protects against rubella.	Air, direct contact	Sometimes rash, fever, swollen lymph nodes	Very serious in pregnant women—can lead to miscarriage, stillbirth, premature delivery, birth defects
Tetanus	Tdap* and Td** vaccines protect against tetanus.	Exposure through cuts on skin	Stiffness in neck and abdominal muscles, difficulty swallowing, muscle spasms, fever	Broken bones, breathing difficulty, death

*Tdap combines protection against diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis.

**Td combines protection against diphtheria and tetanus.

***MMR combines protection against measles, mumps, and rubella.

If you have any questions about your child's vaccines, talk to your child's doctor or nurse.

ROUGHLY
830,000

CHILDREN

WERE HOSPITALIZED IN THE U.S.



DUE TO COVID-19



BETWEEN MARCH 2020 & OCTOBER 2021

COVID-19

COVID-19 is a disease caused by a coronavirus called SARS-CoV-2. It is very serious and very contagious. Since the COVID-19 pandemic first began in early 2020, there have been over 49 million COVID-19 cases and over 746,000 deaths due to COVID in the U.S. alone.

While most children with COVID-19 have mild symptoms or no symptoms at all, children can – and some do – get severely ill from COVID. Those that get very sick from COVID could need to be hospitalized. In rare cases, they might die.

Babies under 1 year old and children with certain medical conditions may be more likely to have severe illness from COVID-19

Experts are looking into a rare, but serious medical condition associated with COVID-19 infection in children called Multisystem Inflammatory Syndrome in Children (MIS-C). Unfortunately, it is not yet known what causes MIS-C and who is at increased risk for getting it. Over 5,500 cases of MIS-C have been reported and half of the cases have been in children between the ages of 9 and 13.

SYMPTOMS

Symptoms may include:

- Shortness of breath or difficulty breathing
- Cough
- Fever or chills
- Muscle or body aches
- Vomiting or diarrhea
- New loss of taste or smell

Children with COVID-19 – with or without symptoms – can also spread COVID-19 to others.

PREVENTION

COVID-19 vaccines are the best protection against the virus that causes COVID.

Children 5-17 years old in the U.S. are recommended to get two doses of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine, spaced three weeks apart. It takes 2 weeks after the second dose for a child to be considered “fully vaccinated.” The Pfizer vaccine is the only vaccine available in the U.S. for people under 18 years old.

Currently, children under 5 are not recommended to get a COVID-19 vaccine.

To see if your children are up to date on their vaccines, look at the [CDC's immunization schedule](#) and talk to your healthcare provider.

Child and Teen & Adult Vaccine-Preventable Diseases eBooks/Booklets



CHILD AND TEEN VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES

Chickenpox (Varicella)	COVID-19	Diphtheria	Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib)	Hepatitis A
Hepatitis B	Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	Influenza (Flu)	Measles	Meningococcal Disease
Mumps	Pneumococcal Disease	Polio	Rotavirus	Rubella
Tetanus	Whooping Cough (Pertussis)			



ADULT VACCINE-PREVENTABLE DISEASES

Chickenpox (Varicella)	COVID-19	Diphtheria	Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib)
Hepatitis A	Hepatitis B	Human Papillomavirus (HPV)	Influenza (Flu)
Measles	Meningococcal Disease	Mumps	Pneumococcal Disease
Rubella	Shingles (Herpes Zoster)	Tetanus	Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Available in English and Spanish.
Individual disease pages or the whole
booklet can be printed and shared.

NO ONE SHOULD SKIP VACCINES BECAUSE OF THEIR COST.

Use Vaccinate Your Family's **online tool** to help you find out how to pay for your family's vaccines.

Just enter in the health insurance status - private insurance, public insurance, no insurance - and the age of the person who needs to be vaccinated.



[VACCINATEYOURFAMILY.ORG/
PAYING-FOR-VAX](https://vaccinateyourfamily.org/paying-for-vax)



Infant Immunizations FAQs

It's natural you have questions about your child's vaccines. Read answers to common questions to learn more about vaccine safety, the recommended schedule, how vaccines protect your child from 14 diseases by age two, and more. CDC regularly updates this document to ensure frequently asked questions from parents are answered with the most current information.

Q: Are vaccines safe?

A: Yes. Vaccines are very safe. The United States' long-standing vaccine safety system ensures that vaccines are as safe as possible. Currently, the United States has the safest vaccine supply in its history. Millions of children safely receive vaccines each year. The most common side effects are typically very mild, such as pain or swelling at the injection site.

Q: What are the side effects of the vaccines? How do I treat them?

A: Vaccines, like any medication, may cause some side effects. **Most of these side effects are very minor, like soreness where the shot was given, fussiness, or a low-grade fever.** These side effects typically only last a couple of days and are treatable. For example, you can apply a cool, wet washcloth on the sore area to ease discomfort.

Serious reactions are very rare. However, if your child experiences any reactions that concern you, call the doctor's office.

Q: What are the risks and benefits of vaccines?

A: Vaccines can prevent infectious diseases that once killed or harmed many infants, children, and adults. Without vaccines, your child is at risk for getting seriously ill and suffering pain, disability, and even death from diseases like measles and whooping cough. The main risks associated with getting vaccines are side effects, which are almost always mild (redness and swelling at the injection site) and go away within a few days. Serious side effects after vaccination, such as a severe allergic reaction, are very rare and doctors and clinic staff are trained to deal with them. **The disease-prevention benefits of getting vaccines are much greater than the possible side effects for almost all children.** The only exceptions to this are cases in which a child has a serious chronic medical condition like cancer or a disease that weakens the immune system, or has had a severe allergic reaction to a previous vaccine dose.

Q: Is there a link between vaccines and autism?

A: No. Scientific studies and reviews continue to show no relationship between vaccines and autism.

Some people have suggested that thimerosal (a compound that contains mercury) in vaccines given to infants and young children might be a cause of autism. Others have suggested that the MMR (measles-mumps-rubella) vaccine may be linked to autism. However, numerous scientists and researchers have studied and continue to study the MMR vaccine and thimerosal, and they reach the same conclusion: there is no link between MMR vaccine or thimerosal and autism.

Q: Can vaccines overload my baby's immune system?

A: Vaccines do not overload the immune system. Every day, a healthy baby's immune system successfully fights off thousands of germs. Antigens are parts of germs that cause the body's immune system to go to work to build antibodies, which fight off diseases.

The antigens in vaccines come from the germs themselves, but the germs are weakened or killed so they cannot cause serious illness. **Even if babies receive several vaccinations in one day, vaccines contain only a tiny fraction of the antigens they encounter every day in their environment.** Vaccines give your child the antibodies they need to fight off serious vaccine-preventable diseases.



CDC recommends all children receive vaccines according to the recommended immunization schedule to protect them from 14 diseases by age two. Read below to get answers to 19 common questions about how vaccines benefit your child, the vaccine schedule, and more.

Q: Why are so many doses needed for each vaccine?

A: Getting every recommended dose of each vaccine provides your child with the best protection possible. Depending on the vaccine, your child will need more than one dose to build high enough immunity to prevent disease or to boost immunity that fades over time. Your child may also receive more than one dose to make sure they are protected if they did not get immunity from a first dose, or to protect them against germs that change over time, like flu. Every dose is important because each protects against infectious diseases that can be especially serious for infants and very young children.

Q: Why do vaccines start so early?

A: The recommended schedule protects infants and children by providing immunity early in life, before they come into contact with life-threatening diseases. Children receive immunization early because they are susceptible to diseases at a young age. The consequences of these diseases can be very serious, even life-threatening, for infants and young children.

Q: What do you think of delaying some vaccines or following a non-standard schedule?

A: Children do not receive any known benefits from following schedules that delay vaccines. Infants and young children who follow immunization schedules that spread out or leave out shots are at risk of developing diseases during the time you delay their shots. Some vaccine-preventable diseases remain common in the United States and children may be exposed to these diseases during the time they are not protected by vaccines, placing them at risk for a serious case of the disease that might cause hospitalization or death.

Infant Immunizations FAQs

Q: Haven't we gotten rid of most of these diseases in this country?

A: Some vaccine-preventable diseases, like pertussis (whooping cough) and chickenpox, remain common in the United States. On the other hand, other diseases vaccines prevent are no longer common in this country because of vaccines. **However, if we stopped vaccinating, the few cases we have in the United States could very quickly become tens or hundreds of thousands of cases.** Even though many serious vaccine-preventable diseases are uncommon in the United States, some are common in other parts of the world. Even if your family does not travel internationally, you could come into contact with international travelers anywhere in your community. Children who don't receive all vaccinations and are exposed to a disease can become seriously sick and spread it through a community.

Q: What are combination vaccines? Why are they used?

A: 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.

Some common combination vaccines are Pediarix®, which combines DTap, Hep B, and IPV (polio), and ProQuad®, which combines MMR and varicella (chickenpox).

Q: Can't I just wait until my child goes to school to catch up on immunizations?

A: Before entering school, young children can be exposed to vaccine-preventable diseases from parents and other adults, brothers and sisters, on a plane, at child care, or even at the grocery store. Children under age 5 are especially susceptible to diseases because their immune systems have not built up the necessary defenses to fight infection. **Don't wait to protect your baby and risk getting these diseases when he or she needs protection now.**

Q: Why does my child need a chickenpox shot? Isn't it a mild disease?

A: Your child needs a chickenpox vaccine because chickenpox can actually be a serious disease. In many cases, children experience a mild case of chickenpox, but other children may have blisters that become infected. Others may develop pneumonia. There is no way to tell in advance how severe your child's symptoms will be.

Before vaccine was available, about 50 children died every year from chickenpox, and about 1 in 500 children who got chickenpox was hospitalized.

Q: My child is sick right now. Is it okay for her to still get shots?

A: Talk with your child's doctor, but children can usually get vaccinated even if they have a mild illness like a cold, earache, mild fever, or diarrhea. If the doctor says it is okay, your child can still get vaccinated.

Q: What are the ingredients in vaccines and what do they do?

A: Vaccines contain ingredients that cause the body to develop immunity. Vaccines also contain very small amounts of other ingredients. **All ingredients play necessary roles either in making the vaccine, or in ensuring that the final product is safe and effective.**

Q: Don't infants have natural immunity? Isn't natural immunity better than the kind from vaccines?

A: Babies may get some temporary immunity (protection) from mom during the last few weeks of pregnancy, but only for diseases to which

mom is immune. Breastfeeding may also protect your baby temporarily from minor infections, like colds. **These antibodies do not last long, leaving your baby vulnerable to disease.**

Natural immunity occurs when your child is exposed to a disease and becomes infected. It is true that natural immunity usually results in better immunity than vaccination, but the risks are much greater. A natural chickenpox infection may result in pneumonia, whereas the vaccine might only cause a sore arm for a couple of days.

Q: Can't I just wait to vaccinate my baby, since he isn't in child care, where he could be exposed to diseases?

A: No, even young children who are cared for at home can be exposed to vaccine preventable diseases, so it's important for them to get all their vaccines at the recommended ages. Children can catch these illnesses from any number of people or places, including from parents, brothers or sisters, visitors to their home, on playgrounds or even at the grocery store. Regardless of whether or not your baby is cared for outside the home, she comes in contact with people throughout the day, some of whom may be sick but not know it yet.

If someone has a vaccine preventable disease, they may not have symptoms or the symptoms may be mild, and they can end up spreading disease to babies or young children. Remember, many of these diseases can be especially dangerous to young children so it is safest to vaccinate your child at the recommended ages to protect her, whether or not she is in child care.

Q: Do I have to vaccinate my baby on schedule if I'm breastfeeding him?

A: Yes, even breastfed babies need to be protected with vaccines at the recommended ages. The immune system is not fully developed at birth, which puts newborns at greater risk for infections.

Breast milk provides important protection from some infections as your baby's immune system is developing. For example, babies who are breastfed have a lower risk of ear infections, respiratory tract infections, and diarrhea. However, breast milk does not protect children against all diseases. Even in breastfed infants, vaccines are the most effective way to prevent many diseases. Your baby needs the long-term protection that can only come from making sure he receives all his vaccines according to the CDC's recommended schedule.

Q: What's wrong with delaying some of my baby's vaccines if I'm planning to get them all eventually?

A: Young children have the highest risk of having a serious case of disease that could cause hospitalization or death. Delaying or spreading out vaccine doses leaves your child unprotected during the time when they need vaccine protection the most. For example, diseases such as Hib or pneumococcus almost always occur in the first 2 years of a baby's life. And some diseases, like Hepatitis B and whooping cough (pertussis), are more serious when babies get them at a younger age. Vaccinating your child according to the CDC's recommended immunization schedule means you can help protect him at a young age.

Q: I got the whooping cough and flu vaccines during my pregnancy. Why does my baby need these vaccines too?

A: The protection (antibodies) you passed to your baby before birth will give him some early protection against whooping cough and flu. However, these antibodies will only give him short-term protection. It is very important for your baby to get vaccines on time so he can start building his own protection against these serious diseases.

Tips for a Less Stressful Shot Visit



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.

Before Getting Shots

Come prepared! Take these steps before your child gets a shot to help make the immunization visit less stressful on you both.

- Read any vaccine materials you received from your child's health care professional and write down any questions you may have.
- Find your child's personal immunization record and bring it to your appointment. An up-to-date record tells your doctor exactly what shots your child has already received.
- Pack a favorite toy or book, and a blanket that your child uses regularly to comfort your child.

For older children

- Be honest with your child. Explain that shots can pinch or sting, but that it won't hurt for long.
- Engage other family members, especially older siblings, to support your child.
- Avoid telling scary stories or making threats about shots.

At the Doctor's Office

If you have questions about immunizations, ask your child's doctor or nurse. Before you leave the appointment, ask your child's doctor for advice on using non-aspirin pain reliever and other steps you can take at home to comfort your child.

Try these ideas for making the shots easier on your child.

- Distract and comfort your child by cuddling, singing, or talking softly.
- Smile and make eye contact with your child. Let your child know that everything is ok.
- Comfort your child with a favorite toy or book. A blanket that smells familiar will help your child feel more comfortable.
- Hold your child firmly on your lap, whenever possible.

Help children see vaccines as a good thing. Never threaten your child with shots, by saying "If you misbehave I will have the nurse give you a shot." Instead, remind children that vaccines can keep them healthy.

Ways to soothe your baby:

- Swaddling
- Skin-to-skin contact
- Offering a sweet beverage, like juice (when the child is older than 6 months)
- Breastfeeding

Your health care professional may cool or numb the injection site to reduce the pain associated with your child's shots.

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP), and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) adapted this information from *Be There for Your Child during Shots*, California Department of Public Health Immunization Branch.

For older children

- Take deep breaths with your child to help “blow out” the pain.
- Point out interesting things in the room to help create distractions.
- Tell or read stories.
- Support your child if he or she cries. Never scold a child for not “being brave.”

Once your child has received all of the shots, be especially supportive. Hold, cuddle, and, for infants, breastfeed or offer a bottle. A soothing voice, combined with praise and hugs will help reassure your child that everything is ok.

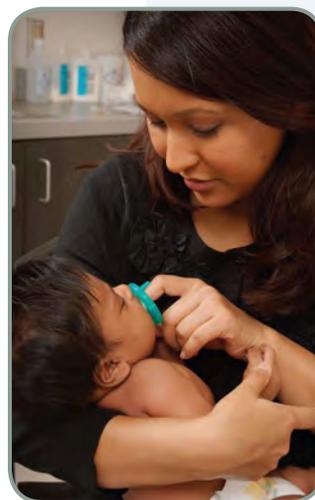
After the Shots

Sometimes children experience mild reactions from vaccines, such as pain at the injection site, a rash or a fever. These reactions are normal and will soon go away. The following tips will help you identify and minimize mild side effects.

- Review any information your doctor gives you about the shots, especially the Vaccine Information Statements or other sheets that outline which side effects might be expected.
- Use a cool, wet cloth to reduce redness, soreness, and swelling in the place where the shot was given.
- Reduce any fever with a cool sponge bath. If your doctor approves, give non-aspirin pain reliever.
- Give your child lots of liquid. It’s normal for some children to eat less during the 24 hours after getting vaccines.
- Pay extra attention to your child for a few days. If you see something that concerns you, call your doctor.

*Remember to schedule your next visit!
Staying current with your child’s immunizations provides the best protection against disease.*

Take a moment to read the Vaccine Information Sheet your health care professional gives you during your visit. This sheet has helpful information and describes possible side effects your child may experience.



Keeping Track Of Your Child's Vaccines: Q & A for Parents



VACCINATE
YOUR FAMILY

WHAT ARE IMMUNIZATION INFORMATION SYSTEMS (IIS)?

Immunization Information Systems (IIS), also known as immunization registries, are electronic systems that have information on the vaccines (shots) that were given to your child. Each state has its own IIS. There is NO cost for having records in the IIS.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF HAVING MY CHILD'S VACCINE (SHOT) RECORD SAVED IN AN IIS?

- Helps your child's doctors and/or other vaccine providers keep track of the shots due for your child.
- Helps your doctor send you vaccine reminders for your child.
- Helps to make sure that your child doesn't miss any shots OR get too many shots.
- Allows you to quickly get a copy of your child's shot record from the doctor.
- Makes sure your child has all of the vaccines needed to start daycare, school and/or camp, and for international travel.

WHAT INFORMATION IS IN MY STATE'S IIS?

The vaccine records in each state's IIS is kept confidential, and only authorized users are able to access the information. The exact information stored in the IIS depends on which state (or city) you live in, but most contain:

- Patient's name (first, middle, and last)
- Patient's birth date
- Patient's gender (male or female)
- Patient's birth state/country
- Mother's name
- Types of shots given
- Dates the shots were given

WHO DO I CONTACT TO SEE IF MY CHILD'S SHOT RECORD IS IN MY STATE'S IIS OR IF I WANT A COPY OF MY CHILD'S SHOT RECORD?

- Contact your doctor's office or other vaccine provider to ask if your child's shot record is in the IIS and if you can have a copy of your child's shot record.
- Contact the IIS in your state or in the state where your child got their last shots to see if they have records in the IIS.
 - To find contact information for your state's IIS, visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/iis/contacts-locate-records.html#state
 - A few states allow the public to directly access the IIS in order to print out their child's shot records.

THERE'S SO MUCH TO DO BEFORE THE BIG DAY...



Visit [Vaccinateyourfamily.org](https://www.vaccinateyourfamily.org)
to learn:

- How getting COVID-19, flu and whooping cough (Tdap) vaccinations while pregnant protect you and your baby.
- Why it's important to follow the CDC's recommended schedule.
- Why your baby needs the hepatitis B vaccine before leaving the hospital.
- How vaccines in the U.S. are carefully monitored for safety.
- How to pay for your family's vaccines.
- Where to find trusted resources on vaccines.
- And much, much more...

Let us help
guide you on
the way to
keep
your baby
healthy from
the start.



VACCINES DURING PREGNANCY

Getting Vaccinated While Pregnant Protects Both You AND Your Baby



Flu

Changes in your immune, heart and lung functions during pregnancy make you more likely to get seriously ill from the flu. If you get the flu while pregnant, it can also be dangerous for your baby because it increases the chance for complications like premature labor and delivery, and birth defects. **Getting a flu shot during pregnancy is a simple thing you can do to help protect yourself and your baby from flu.** When you get a flu shot, your body makes antibodies that are passed to your baby to help protect them from flu during their first few months of life. This is important because your baby is at high risk of severe flu illness, but can't get their own flu vaccine until they are 6 months old. Many studies show that the flu vaccine is safe for both you and your baby during any trimester.

Whooping Cough (Pertussis)

Whooping cough can be a very serious disease, especially in infants. Some babies with whooping cough have coughing fits and gasp for air, while others may stop breathing. About half of babies younger than 12 months with whooping cough are hospitalized. The good news is that you can help protect your baby from this dangerous, possibly deadly, disease. **By getting the whooping cough vaccine (also called Tdap) during pregnancy, you'll pass antibodies to your baby that will help protect them until they start getting their own whooping cough vaccinations (DTaP) at 2 months old.** The Tdap vaccine is safe for you and your baby, and experts recommend you get vaccinated during the third trimester of EVERY pregnancy.

COVID-19

Pregnant and recently pregnant people are at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness than those who are not pregnant. Getting sick with COVID-19 during pregnancy may also put your baby at increased risk of stillbirth and preterm birth. **For the best protection from COVID-19, experts recommend that pregnant, recently pregnant, and breastfeeding individuals get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible.** The benefits of getting vaccinated against COVID-19 greatly outweighs the risks.

Surround Your Baby with Protection

Ask friends, family and caregivers who plan to visit your baby to be up-to-date on all of their vaccinations at least two weeks before meeting your newborn.

[Vaccinateyourfamily.org/pregnancy](https://vaccinateyourfamily.org/pregnancy)



VACCINES DURING PREGNANCY

Getting Vaccinated While Pregnant Protects Both You AND Your Baby



COVID-19 Vaccines

Pregnant and recently pregnant people are at higher risk of serious COVID-19 illness. Getting sick with COVID-19 during pregnancy may also put your baby at increased risk of stillbirth and preterm birth.

For the best protection from COVID-19, experts recommend that pregnant, recently pregnant and breastfeeding individuals get the COVID-19 vaccine as soon as possible.

The benefits of getting vaccinated against COVID-19 greatly outweighs the risks.

Other Vaccines Recommended DURING Pregnancy

✓ **Tdap Vaccine**

✓ **Flu Vaccine**

Questions? Talk to your OB-GYN or nurse midwife about the vaccines recommended during pregnancy. More information available at [Vaccinateyourfamily.org/pregnancy](https://vaccinateyourfamily.org/pregnancy)

Surround Your Baby with Protection

For additional protection, make sure friends, family and caregivers who will be in contact with your baby are up to date on all of their vaccinations **at least two weeks before** meeting your newborn.



VACCINES DURING PREGNANCY

Getting Vaccinated While Pregnant Protects Both You AND Your Baby

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Flu Vaccine

Changes in your immune, heart and lung functions during pregnancy make you more likely to get very sick from the flu. **If you get the flu while pregnant, it can also be dangerous for your baby** because it increases the chance for complications like premature labor and delivery, and birth defects.

Getting a flu shot during pregnancy is a simple thing you can do to help protect yourself and your baby. When you get a flu shot while pregnant, your body makes antibodies that are passed to your developing baby to help protect them from flu during their first few months of life. This is important because your baby is at high risk of getting very sick from flu, but can't get their own flu vaccine until they are 6 months old. Sadly, every year, flu sends about 20,000 children under 5 to the hospital, and about 100 children - sometimes more - die.

Flu shots have safely been given to millions of people - including pregnant people - over many years. Numerous studies show that the **flu vaccine is safe for both you and your baby, and can be received during any trimester.**

The flu vaccine takes 2 weeks to start providing protection from flu. Make sure you and your family members are vaccinated before flu starts spreading in your community.

Other Vaccines Recommended DURING Pregnancy

✓ **Tdap Vaccine**

✓ **COVID-19 Vaccine**

Questions? Talk to your OB-GYN or nurse midwife about the vaccines recommended during pregnancy. More information available at [Vaccinateyourfamily.org/pregnancy](https://vaccinateyourfamily.org/pregnancy)

Surround Your Baby with Protection

Ask friends, family and caregivers who plan to visit your baby to be up-to-date on all of their vaccinations **at least two weeks before** meeting your newborn.





Credible Organizations & Websites for Vaccine Information and Resources

Vaccinate Your Family (VYF) - vaccinateyourfamily.org & vaccinateyourfamily.org/covid19faq & vaccinateyourfamily.org/current-flu-season

American Academy of Family Physicians (AAFP)– aafp.org & familydoctor.org

American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) – aap.org & healthychildren.org/english/safety-prevention/immunizations

American College of Obstetricians and Gynecologists (ACOG) – acog.org/womens-health & acog.org

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) - cdc.gov/vaccines & cdc.gov/coronavirus

Kimberly Coffey Foundation (Meningitis)- kimberlycoffeyfoundation.org

Families Fighting Flu (FFF) - familiesfightingflu.org

HPV Vaccination Roundtable – hpvroundtable.org

Immunization Action Coalition (IAC) – immunize.org & vaccineinformation.org

Institute for Vaccine Safety at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health - vaccinesafety.edu

March of Dimes - marchofdimes.org/pregnancy/vaccinations-and-pregnancy.aspx

National Foundation for Infectious Diseases (NFID) - nfid.org

Meningitis B Action Project - meningitisbactionproject.org

Society for Maternal-Fetal Medicine - smfm.org/covidfamily

Vaccine Education Center at The Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia (CHOP) - vaccine.chop.edu & COVIDVaccineAnswers.org

Voices for Vaccines (VFV) – voicesforvaccines.org