

# CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS

Childhood diseases may have been forgotten, but they are not gone.

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Confirm your child is protected.

Vaccines are the best way to protect your child against vaccine-preventable diseases throughout their lives.

Ask your child's health care provider if your child is up to date with all recommended vaccines.

# VACCINES

YOUR BEST SHOT AT PREVENTION

If you have questions, please call your health care provider or the Iowa Department of Public Health at

1-800-831-6293

**FOR ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON VACCINES AND DISEASES, PLEASE VISIT:**

<https://idph.iowa.gov/immtb/immunization>  
[www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org) • [www.cdc.gov/vaccines](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)  
[www.vaccine.chop.edu](http://www.vaccine.chop.edu) • [www.aap.org](http://www.aap.org)

# CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS



IOWA  
IMMUNIZATION  
PROGRAM

# What are vaccines and how do they work?

Vaccines teach the immune system how to recognize and fight bacteria and viruses before an infection can happen. Vaccines provide protection without a child actually getting and suffering the complications of a disease. Some vaccines require only one dose, while others require several doses to provide complete protection.

## WHAT VACCINES SHOULD MY CHILD RECEIVE?

Many childhood diseases may have been forgotten, but they still exist. If your child gets sick from one of these diseases, it could be serious. They could suffer from blindness, brain damage, deafness, deformities, kidney damage, paralysis and even death.

### Getting your child vaccinated on time will protect against the following diseases and bacteria:

- Diphtheria
- Tetanus (lockjaw)
- Pertussis (whooping cough)
- Hepatitis A
- Hepatitis B
- *Haemophilus influenzae* Type b (Hib)
- Influenza (flu)
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rotavirus
- Rubella
- Pneumococcal
- Polio
- Varicella (chickenpox)

## WHEN SHOULD CHILDREN RECEIVE VACCINES?

Children are immunized early because they are at risk for diseases at a young age, and these diseases can be very serious and even life-threatening. Children should receive a basic series of vaccines during the first two years of life and then again before school entry. It is important to follow the recommended immunization schedule and vaccinate your child on time. Following a different schedule, or delaying vaccines, leaves your child at risk of developing diseases while the vaccines are delayed.

### Vaccines are routinely recommended at the following ages:

- Birth
- 2 months
- 4 months
- 6 months
- 12-24 months
- 4-6 years

## ARE VACCINES SAFE?

Vaccines are safe and effective. Vaccines are held to the highest standard of safety. The United States currently has the safest, most effective vaccine supply in history. Years of testing are required by law before a vaccine can be licensed. Once in use, vaccines are continually monitored for safety and effectiveness. However, like any medication, vaccines can cause side effects. Most side effects from vaccines are minor and include soreness where the vaccine was given or a low-grade fever. Such minor symptoms are normal and should be expected as the body builds immunity. Serious reactions are very rare. Anyone who receives a vaccine should be fully informed about both the benefits and the risks. Any questions or concerns should be discussed with your child's health care provider.

## IS THERE HELP AVAILABLE WITH THE COST OF VACCINES?

Check to see if your health insurance covers vaccines. If your child does not have health insurance or does not have insurance that covers vaccines, ask your health care provider or local public health agency about the Vaccines for Children (VFC) program. The VFC program provides vaccines to eligible children from birth through 18 years of age. Ask your health care provider if they participate in the VFC program or visit the Immunization Program website at <https://idph.iowa.gov/immmtb/immunization> for a list of participating VFC program providers.

## YOUR CHILD'S IMMUNIZATION RECORD

It is important to maintain immunization records in a safe place. Proof of immunizations may be necessary throughout life. The Iowa Department of Public Health does not maintain historical paper immunization records. However, immunization records can be entered into a permanent statewide electronic database called Iowa's Immunization Registry Information System (IRIS). IRIS contains a public record access feature that allows parents or adults to search for their own or their child's immunization record at <https://iris.iowa.gov>. If records are not found, talk with your health care provider about entering your child's immunization record into IRIS.

