

# Five Important Reasons to Vaccinate Your Child



You want to do what is best for your children. You know about the importance of car seats, baby gates and other ways to keep them safe. But, did you know that one of the best ways to protect your children is to make sure they have **all** of their vaccinations?

**Immunizations can save your child's life.** Because of advances in medical science, your child can be protected against more diseases than ever before. Some diseases that once injured or killed thousands of children, have been eliminated completely and others are close to extinction— primarily due to safe and effective vaccines.

**Vaccination is very safe and effective.** Vaccines are only given to children after a long and careful review by scientists, doctors, and healthcare professionals. Vaccines will involve some discomfort and may cause pain, redness, or tenderness at the site of injection. Serious side effects following vaccination, such as severe allergic reaction, are very rare. The disease-prevention benefits of getting vaccines are much greater than the possible side effects for almost all children.

**Immunization protects others you care about.** Unfortunately, some babies are too young to be completely vaccinated and some people may not be able to receive certain vaccinations due to severe allergies, weakened immune systems from conditions like leukemia, or other reasons. To help keep them safe, it is important that you and your children who are able to get vaccinated are fully immunized. This not only protects your family, but also helps prevent the spread of these diseases to your friends and loved ones.

**Immunizations can save your family time and money.** A child with a vaccine-preventable disease can be denied attendance at schools or daycare facilities. Some vaccine-preventable diseases can result in prolonged disabilities and can take a financial toll because of lost time at work, medical bills or long-term disability care. In contrast, getting vaccinated against these diseases is a good investment and usually covered by insurance. The Vaccines for Children program is a federally funded program that provides vaccines at no cost to children from low-income families. To find out more about the VFC program, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/> or ask your child's health care professional.

**Immunization protects future generations.** Vaccines have reduced and, in some cases, eliminated many diseases that killed or severely disabled people just a few generations ago. If we continue vaccinating now, and vaccinating completely, parents in the future may be able to trust that some diseases of today will no longer be around to harm their children in the future.