

# Road to **WELLfluent**™

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## MAKING THE VACCINE DECISION: ADDRESSING COMMON CONCERNS

Parents often have questions about the vaccines recommended for their children.

**Your child's doctor can answer any questions you might have.**

Most families decide to follow the recommended vaccination schedule published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child-easyread.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/easy-to-read/child-easyread.html)

### 2023 Recommended Immunizations for Children from Birth Through 6 Years Old

VACCINE	Birth	1 MONTH	2 MONTHS	4 MONTHS	6 MONTHS	12 MONTHS	15 MONTHS	18 MONTHS	19-23 MONTHS	2-3 YEARS	4-6 YEARS
<b>HepB</b> Hepatitis B	HepB	HepB			HepB						
<b>RV*</b> Rotavirus		RV	RV	RV*							
<b>DTaP</b> Diphtheria, Pertussis, & Tetanus		DTaP	DTaP	DTaP		DTaP					DTaP
<b>Hib*</b> Haemophilus influenzae type b		Hib	Hib	Hib*	Hib						
<b>PCV13, PCV15</b> Pneumococcal disease		PCV	PCV	PCV	PCV						
<b>IPV</b> Polio		IPV	IPV			IPV					IPV
<b>COVID-19**</b> Coronavirus disease 2019								COVID-19**			
<b>Flu*</b> Influenza								Flu (One or Two Doses Yearly)*			
<b>MMR</b> Measles, Mumps, & Rubella						MMR					MMR
<b>Varicella</b> Chickenpox						Varicella					Varicella
<b>HepA*</b> Hepatitis A						HepA*		HepA*			

**FOOTNOTES**

- RV\*** Administering a third dose at age 6 months depends on the brand of Hib or rotavirus vaccine used for previous dose.
- Hib\*** Number of doses recommended depends on your child's age and type of COVID-19 vaccine used.
- COVID-19\*\*** Number of doses recommended depends on your child's age and type of COVID-19 vaccine used.
- Flu\*** Two doses given at least 4 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.
- HepA\*** Two doses of Hep A vaccine are needed for lasting protection. The 2 doses should be given between age 12 and 33 months. Both doses should be separated by at least 6 months. Children 2 years and older who have not received 2 doses of Hep A should complete the series.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

- If your child misses a shot recommended for their age, talk to your child's doctor as soon as possible to see when the missed shot can be given.
  - If your child has any medical conditions that put them at risk for infection (e.g., sickle cell, HIV infection, cochlear implants) or is traveling outside the United States, talk to your child's doctor about additional vaccines that they may need.
- Talk with your child's doctor if you have questions about any shot recommended for your child.

### Strengthening your baby's immune system

Immunity is the body's way of preventing disease. Because a baby's immune system is not fully developed at birth, babies face a greater risk of becoming infected and getting seriously ill. Vaccines help teach the immune system how to defend against germs. Vaccination protects your baby by helping build up their natural defenses.

Children are exposed to thousands of germs every day.

### Vaccines protect against diseases

Different vaccines work in different ways, but every vaccine helps the body's immune system learn how to fight germs. It typically takes a few weeks for protection to develop after vaccination, and that protection can last a lifetime. A few vaccines, such as those for tetanus or seasonal flu, require occasional booster doses to maintain the body's defenses.

This happens through the food they eat, the air they breathe, and the things they put in their mouth. Babies are born with immune systems that can fight most germs, but some germs cause serious or even deadly diseases a baby can't handle. For those, babies need the help of vaccines.



### **Antigens**

Vaccines use very small amounts of antigens to help your child's immune system recognize and learn to fight serious diseases. Antigens are the parts of a germ that cause the body's immune system to go to work.

### **Vaccine ingredients**

Today's vaccines use only the ingredients they need to be as safe and effective as possible.

### **Vaccines are safe**

Before a new vaccine is ever given to people, extensive lab testing is done. Once testing in people begins, it can still take years before clinical studies are complete and the vaccine is licensed. After a vaccine is licensed, the Food and Drug Administration (FDA), CDC, National Institutes of Health (NIH), and other federal agencies continue routine monitoring and investigate any potential safety concerns. CDC and the FDA take great care to make sure that a vaccine is safe both before it is licensed and after the public begins using it. Making sure that all vaccines are safe is a top priority for CDC.

### **Mild side effects are expected**

Vaccines, like medicine, can have some side effects. But most people who get vaccinated have only mild side effects or none at all. The most common side effects include fever, tiredness, body aches, and redness, swelling, and tenderness where the shot was given. Mild reactions usually go away on their own within a few days. Serious, long-lasting side effects are extremely rare. We know they are rare because CDC tracks and investigates reports of serious side effects.

### **Why your child should get vaccinated**

Vaccines can prevent common diseases that used to seriously harm or even kill infants, children, and adults. Without vaccines, your child is at risk of becoming seriously ill or even dying from childhood diseases such as measles and whooping cough.

### **Combination vaccines.**

**MEASLES:** The United States had more than 1,200 cases of measles in 2019. This was the greatest number of cases reported in the U.S. since 1992 and since measles was declared eliminated in 2000.

- It is always better to prevent a disease than to treat one after it occurs.
- Vaccination is a safe, highly effective, and easy way to help keep your family healthy.
- The recommended vaccination schedule balances when a child is likely to be exposed to a disease and when a vaccine will be most effective.
- Vaccines are tested to ensure they can be given safely and effectively at the recommended ages.



**Source:** [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/why-vaccinate/vaccine-decision.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/why-vaccinate/vaccine-decision.html)

# Sports and Physical Activity

Did you know that **55.4%** of children and teenagers between the ages of 9 and 17 do not complete the recommended amount of physical activity set by the World Health Organization (WHO)? There are numerous benefits of physical activity for preschoolers.

In fact, the ALADINO study coordinated by the Spanish Agency for Food Safety and Nutrition (AECOSAN) confirms that 4 out of 10 children from 6 to 9 years old are overweight and **64%** of children dedicate more hours of their day to sedentary activities (television, computer, or cell phone).

A “healthy lifestyle” does not just mean a balanced diet. The importance of regular physical activity, sleep routines, and working on mental health are all vital.

There are benefits of physical activity youth, as well as benefits of exercise for teenagers. Aside from cardiovascular health and healthy weight, exercise for children helps strengthen their bones, joints, and muscles.

According to WHO, physical activity promotes the development of social skills among youth (self-confidence, social interaction, integration). It can also help with feelings of anxiety and depression.

## **Recommendations for daily physical activity and sports:**

Kids 5 to 17 years old should participate in a minimum of 60 minutes daily of moderate to vigorous physical activity. Daily physical activity of more than 60 minutes leads to greater health benefits.

### **Minimum of 60 minutes of physical activity daily:**

Children ages 5 to 17 years old should participate in about 60 minutes daily of moderate to vigorous physical activity. Physical activity improves health and reduces the risk of developing chronic illnesses, including obesity and diabetes.

### **Limit the use of screens (maximum of two hours a day):**

Children and teens that spend a substantial amount of time watching television, playing video games, at the computer, or with their phone or tablet are physically less active.

WHO recommends a maximum of two hours of screen time a day. There are many fun physical activities for children to engage in outdoors, such as bike riding, going for a swim, and gardening.

### **Lead an active lifestyle every day:**

Regular physical activity helps maintain a healthy body, improves the development of the muscular system, and benefits cardiovascular health. It is important not to confuse physical activity with sports:

All physical activities benefit one’s health!

### **Practice physical activity among family:**

Not only is exercise for children’s growth and development important, but it’s an excellent way to form a strong family bond and strengthen the connections between children and their families.



Source: [www.gasolfoundation.org/physical-activity-and-sports](http://www.gasolfoundation.org/physical-activity-and-sports)

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