YOUNG CHILDREN AND VACCINES

Protect Your Child With Vaccines

Why does my child need vaccines?

Vaccines can protect your young child from 14 dangerous diseases. Diseases that vaccines can prevent could be very serious.

Some preventable diseases are common in the U.S., like whooping cough and flu. Others are rare here, but they happen in other countries. Unvaccinated people who travel abroad can bring diseases back with them. This puts young children at risk, if they do not have their vaccines.

What is the vaccination (immunization) schedule?

The vaccination (also called immunization) schedule tells you when your child needs to get vaccines. This schedule is set by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). If you follow the schedule, it will help protect your child early in life, before your child is exposed to serious diseases. For some vaccines, your child needs three or four shots before they are 2 years old. Your child might also need booster shots when they get older.

What are the side effects of vaccines?

Some side effects of vaccines are soreness where the child got the shot, fussiness, or a low fever. These go away in a few days. Serious side effects are rare.

How to protect your child's health

- Learn which vaccines your child needs to stay healthy. You can find information on the CDC website (www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents).

- Get your child's vaccines at the times your child's doctor recommends.

- Some vaccines need more than one dose. Get all recommended doses.

- Ask the doctor how to take care of your child after they get a vaccine.

- If shots are stressful for you or your child, ask the doctor for tips.

- Get a vaccine tracking card from the doctor or from your state health department. Use it to keep a record of your child's vaccines.

- Ask the doctor to send you reminders about when your child needs their next vaccines.

- If your child has missed any vaccines, work with the doctor to catch up.

Have more questions?

Talk to your child's doctor or visit www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents.

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