



Vaccine Information for Parents

July 2025



Frequently Asked Questions: Vaccinating Your Child

Most parents choose to vaccinate their children* but some still have questions. Please see the information below to learn how vaccines will help to keep your child healthy.



Why are vaccines still necessary? Haven't we gotten rid of most of these diseases that cause serious illness in the US?

- Vaccine-preventable diseases like measles, whooping cough, and chickenpox have not gone away entirely.
- When vaccines are skipped, people are at risk for becoming sick or developing severe illness.
- If fewer people get vaccinated, a small number of cases could increase greatly.



Are vaccines safe?

- Yes, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Food and Drug Association (FDA) take many steps to ensure that vaccines are safe before and after people begin to use them.
- Vaccines can take years to become licensed, but once they are, systems like the Vaccine Adverse Events Reporting System (VAERS) and the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD) are used to check on vaccine safety.
- Vaccine side effects are mild (e.g., soreness where the shot was given, low grade fever) and usually last only a few days. Serious side effects from vaccines are uncommon and much less severe than the diseases they prevent.

*For the CDC's children's vaccine schedule, visit [cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-schedules](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/imz-schedules)





Can I spread out or skip vaccinations for my child?

- The CDC recommended vaccine schedule is specifically designed to protect your child from 18 potentially serious diseases at exactly the right time.
- Delaying or spreading out vaccine doses leaves your child unprotected when they need vaccine protection the most. It also leaves them at higher risk of getting sick and spreading illness to others in their home or community.



Will the ingredients in vaccines harm my child?

- Vaccines use only the ingredients they need to be as safe and effective as possible. Ingredients are safe, are used in tiny amounts, and serve a specific purpose (e.g., help make the vaccine more effective and long-lasting).
- Many of the ingredients in vaccines help to provide immunity (protection) against a specific disease and are commonly found in our own bodies or in foods that we eat.



Could vitamins, exercise and a healthy diet replace vaccinating my child?

- Although a healthy lifestyle is important, it is not enough to keep children from getting very sick from vaccine-preventable illnesses.
- Following the CDC's recommended vaccination schedule will also help provide immunity (protection) from vaccine-preventable illnesses.



What if I can't afford to vaccinate my child?

- The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program is a federally funded program that provides vaccines at no cost to children whose families cannot afford to pay.
- For more information about VFC, visit nj.gov/health/vaccines/programs/vfc.

For more information about vaccines for your children, visit
cdc.gov/vaccines-children



How to Make Vaccinations Less Stressful for Your Child



Comfort them with a favorite toy, book, or blanket.



Distract your child by cuddling them, singing, or talking softly.



Smile and let them know that everything is OK.



Take deep breaths with your older child to help with fear and discomfort while they are getting the shot.



Do not threaten your child with shots as a punishment.



Do not scold your child for being frightened or for crying; instead, give them comfort and support.

To stay current with your child's vaccination schedule, scan the QR code below.



SCAN ME



VACCINE INFORMATION: WHERE CAN WE FIND THE TRUTH?

With so much information about vaccines available on social media, the internet, written articles, and other sources, how do we know what information is true or that the sources are trustworthy? The steps listed below will help you find trusted sources as well as factual information about vaccines.

1

Is the source trustworthy?

- Who wrote the post or article; are they qualified to be a vaccine expert?
- Will the author benefit personally or financially if their advice is followed?
- Check the end of the web address to see if the organization/publisher is well-known (e.g., .edu, .gov or .org, .com.).

2

Are there any "red flags"?

- Does the information seem "one-sided" or biased?
- Is the information outdated? Is the grammar poor or are words misspelled?
- Is there a claim of a miracle or secret cure?

3

Is the information true or accurate?

- Is the information based on scientific evidence and fact?
- Is the original source listed?
- Do other sources back up the information?

4

Important to Remember:

Even when you are able to find trusted sources and authors, internet searches, articles, and posts should never replace discussing vaccine concerns with your health care provider.

Vaccine Information Resources

1. [cdc.gov/vaccines-children/about/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-children/about/index.html)
2. vaccineinformation.org
3. stronger.org/resources/how-to-spot-misinformation

Disclaimer: Links to external sites are for informational purposes only and do not imply endorsement or responsibility for their content.



Stay Up to Date and Vaccinate

Getting your children vaccinated on time by following the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) Recommended Immunization Schedule can help them stay healthy as they grow older.



Get Early Protection

Vaccinate before your child is exposed to dangerous diseases; waiting until school begins, may not allow enough time for vaccines to work.



Attend School and Activities without Delay

Vaccinate your children on time so they can start the new school year, join a sports team or group activities, and travel without delay.



Avoid Disease-Related Complications

Some diseases could lead to serious complications (e.g., Meningitis could lead to hearing loss, COVID-19 could lead to trouble breathing). Getting vaccinated can help prevent this from happening.



Prevent the Spread of Illness

Getting vaccinated can help prevent the spread of illness and protect friends, family and other community members, especially those who are too young to be vaccinated or those who are at high-risk for disease.



Stay Protected

The CDC immunization schedule is carefully designed to provide protection at just the right time. Some vaccines need to be given more than once so your child can remain healthy.





Tips for Staying Up to Date



Schedule well-child visits and follow the CDC recommended vaccine schedule when making your child's vaccination appointments.¹



Keep track of your children's vaccines by enrolling in the New Jersey Immunization Information Service (NJiIS).²



If you or someone you know needs assistance with paying for children's vaccinations, visit the Vaccines for Children Program (VFC) website to see if you qualify.³



To avoid delays in starting school, preschool or daycare, know what your school and state guidelines are regarding vaccinations.⁴



Be a good example for your children by making sure you and other adult family members are also up to date with their vaccinations.

Important Links

1. [cdc.gov/vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines)
2. njiis.nj.gov/docs/NJIIS_Your_Best_Shot.pdf
3. nj.gov/health/vaccines/programs/vfc
4. nj.gov/health/cd/imm_requirements



Protect Your Children with Vaccines



To see if you qualify for the Vaccines for Children program, visit:
nj.gov/health/vaccines/programs/vfc.



Locations for vaccination:

- Your health care provider
- Local health department:
localhealth.nj.gov
- Vaccines.gov
- Federally Qualified Health Centers:
Scan QR code or visit
nj.gov/health/fhs/primarycare/fqhc

