



## COMMON QUESTIONS ABOUT VACCINE SAFETY

### Q: Are vaccines safe for my child?

Yes. Vaccines are safe. They are among the safest tools of modern medicine. All vaccines undergo in-depth testing and must be shown to be safe and to work before they are approved for use in Canada. But it doesn't stop there - even after a vaccine has been approved, its safety is closely monitored.

### Q: Can vaccines cause side effects?

Yes, sometimes. But vaccine side effects are usually very mild, like soreness, redness, or swelling where the vaccine was given, or a mild fever. These side effects usually go away after a day or two. Serious side effects are very rare.

### Q: Are the ingredients in vaccines safe?

Yes. Vaccine ingredients have been carefully studied for a long time and are safe in the small amounts used in vaccines. These ingredients are needed to either make the vaccine or to make sure that it is safe and works well.

### Q: Is it safe for my child to get more than one vaccine at a time?

Yes. Getting more than one vaccine at the same time is safe, and ensures your child is protected as quickly as possible. Studies show that routine childhood vaccines are just as safe and work just as well when they are given at the same time as when they are given at separate appointments.

### Q: Are combination vaccines safe?

Yes. Combination vaccines are safe. These vaccines protect your child against several diseases with just one injection. Before a combination vaccine is approved, studies must show that it is just as safe and works just as well as each of the individual vaccines given on their own.



## QUESTIONS?

Visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca)

Call HealthLinkBC at 8-1-1

Speak to your health care provider

Contact your local health unit\*



Health Unit Finder:  
[www.immunizebc.ca/finder](http://www.immunizebc.ca/finder)

\*Health units are called public health units, community health centres, or primary care homes in some areas of B.C.

# Immunization: A healthy choice for your child



## Learn about:

- **Why** immunizations are **important** for your child
- **Why** it's important we keep immunizing
- **When** to get your child immunized
- **Why** it's important to follow the recommended **schedule**
- **Where** your child can get immunized
- Common questions about **vaccine safety**



ImmunizeBC





**Immunizing your child is one of the most important things you can do to protect their health.**

### WHY IMMUNIZATIONS ARE IMPORTANT FOR YOUR CHILD

Immunizations (also called vaccinations) protect your child against many dangerous diseases. These diseases can cause serious harm such as pneumonia (an infection of the lungs), meningitis (an infection of the lining that covers the brain), deafness, seizures, brain damage, paralysis, and even death.



### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT WE KEEP IMMUNIZING

Some of the diseases vaccines prevent, like pertussis (whooping cough), are still common in Canada. Others are still common in other parts of the world and can be brought to Canada through travel. Even one case of a disease can spread quickly when people are not immunized. This is why we need to keep immunizing.

### WHEN TO GET YOUR CHILD IMMUNIZED

It is recommended that your child gets immunized starting at 2 months of age, then at 4 months, 6 months, 12 months, and 18 months. Other vaccines are needed starting at age 4 (kindergarten entry) and in school.



You can find B.C.'s routine immunization schedule for infants and young children at [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca).

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW THE RECOMMENDED SCHEDULE

The recommended immunization schedule gives your child the most protection as early as possible. It is designed to protect your child when their immune system is not fully developed and before they are exposed to vaccine-preventable diseases. There is no known benefit to delaying or spacing out vaccines. Doing so leaves your child at risk of getting serious diseases at a young age.



**For best protection follow the recommended schedule and get your child immunized on time.**

**Sign up to receive immunization appointment reminders via text message!**

*Two ways to sign up:*

1. Text "sign up" to **604-757-0583**
2. Visit [www.immunizebc.ca/reminders](http://www.immunizebc.ca/reminders)

### WHERE YOUR CHILD CAN GET IMMUNIZED



Your child can get immunized at your local health unit\*. Some family doctors and nurse practitioners also give immunizations. It's best to book your child's appointment early as clinics fill up quickly.

### WHY IT'S IMPORTANT TO KEEP YOUR CHILD'S IMMUNIZATION RECORD

Keep your child's record in a safe place. You may need your child's record when you register your child for school, if you move, if you travel, or if you visit a new health care provider.



A free immunization tracking app. To learn more and download, visit [www.canimmunize.ca](http://www.canimmunize.ca).

**Immunizations may cause some pain. Fortunately, there are many things you can do that can help make the immunization experience more positive for both you and your child. Talk to your health care provider or visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca) to learn more.**