

# Vaccinate on time.

Getting vaccines at the recommended time is the best way to protect against **serious diseases.**



**National Immunization  
Awareness Month**

**IT'S NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION AWARENESS MONTH!**

## **Get Back on Track with Routine Vaccinations**

Both adults and children should stay up to date on their immunizations to stay healthy and prevent infection.

The immune system is the body's defense system to keep you healthy. The immune system intersects with almost every aspect of human health and disease. When it is functioning correctly, it keeps you from getting sick. Vaccines are a way to train the immune system and establish memory ahead of time without the risk of infection, providing effective immunization against specific diseases.

To learn more about the immune system and its relation to health, visit [immunologyexplained.aai.org](http://immunologyexplained.aai.org).



### **Why is it important to get regular immunizations, especially for children?**

Vaccines are one of the most important advances in the history of medicine, preventing millions of deaths from diseases every year. Thanks to vaccines, once-feared diseases such as polio and measles are now rarer threats. Staying up to date on vaccines can protect both yourself and those around you by preventing the spread of disease. Vaccination is much safer than trying to develop natural immunity from a disease because some diseases can have lasting, damaging effects on your body.

Babies are born with developing immune systems. Following vaccine recommendations for newborns and children ensures they are vaccinated safely, effectively, and before exposure to certain germs. Experts review lots of research to determine the best timing for your baby's vaccines with their developing immune system in mind. To stay healthy and prevent serious illness, vaccines are recommended for children and adults across the lifespan.

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### How do vaccines protect us?

Vaccines help our immune systems fight infection faster and more effectively. They do this by triggering an immune response that trains your body to recognize disease-causing germs and fight them off if they ever invade your body.

To induce an immune response, some vaccines are made of very small amounts of weak or dead germs that won't make you sick. Other vaccines carry information that allow cells to produce a target that your immune system recognizes and reacts to. Some people can experience mild side effects from some vaccines, such as soreness at the injection site, but these usually resolve quickly.

The idea that vaccines cause autism came from a long-since-discredited and retracted study that incorrectly linked the measles, mumps and rubella (MMR) vaccine to autism. This connection has never been accurately confirmed.



### How do we know that vaccines are safe?

Understanding the process of vaccine testing and approval can help alleviate any concerns you might have as you research options for your or your family's health.

Vaccines are thoroughly researched and tested for their ability to provide immunity and safety. The underlying basic research in laboratories is conducted for many years before possible vaccines are identified. Then the possible vaccines or vaccine candidates go through years of research in the laboratory and initial testing. Most vaccines are tested in tens of thousands of human volunteers before they can be considered for approval, which requires a rigorous review process by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA).

Once approved by the FDA, vaccines will continue to be monitored for safety; if signs emerge that a vaccine imposes undue risks, the vaccine can be withdrawn from the market.

### Where can I learn more?

#### Information for Parents:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-children/index.html>

<https://www.aap.org/en/patient-care/immunizations/>

#### Vaccines for Adults:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines-adults/index.html>

#### Learn more about the Immune System:

<https://www.immunologyexplained.aai.org>

Vaccine-preventable  
diseases are still  
a threat.

Vaccination is the best

**protection.**



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