

Many new parents have questions about vaccines. Here are some common questions and answers that you can give your parents about vaccines:

Are vaccines safe?

Yes. Vaccines are very safe. The United States' long-standing vaccine safety system ensures that vaccines are as safe as possible. Currently, the United States has the safest vaccine supply in its history. Millions of children safely receive vaccines each year.

What are the risks and benefits of vaccines?

Vaccines can prevent infectious diseases that once killed or harmed many infants, children, and adults. Without vaccines, your child is at risk for getting seriously ill and suffering pain, disability, and even death from diseases like measles and whooping cough. The main risks associated with getting vaccines are side effects, which are almost always mild (redness and swelling at the injection site) and go away within a few days. Serious side effects after vaccination, such as a severe allergic reaction, are very rare and doctors and clinic staff are trained to deal with them. **The disease-prevention benefits of getting vaccines are much greater than the possible side effects for almost all children.** The only exceptions to this are cases in which a child has a serious chronic medical condition like cancer or a disease that weakens the immune system, or has had a severe allergic reaction to a previous vaccine dose.

What are the side effects of vaccines?

Vaccines, like any medication, may cause some side effects. **Most of these side effects are very minor, like soreness where the shot was given, fussiness, or a low-grade fever.** These side effects typically only last a couple of days and are treatable. For example, you can apply a cool, wet washcloth on the sore area to ease discomfort.

Serious reactions are very rare. However, if your child experiences any reactions that concern you, call the doctor's office.

Why do vaccines start so early?

The recommended schedule protects infants and children by providing immunity early in life, before they come into contact with life-threatening diseases. Children receive immunization early because they are susceptible to diseases at a young age. The consequences of these diseases can be very serious, even life-threatening, for infants and young children.

Should my child get shots if they are sick?

Talk with your child's doctor, but children can usually get vaccinated even if they have a mild illness like a cold, earache, mild fever, or diarrhea. If the doctor says it is okay, your child can still get vaccinated.

Can I wait to vaccinate until my baby since they aren't in child care?

No, even young children who are cared for at home can be exposed to vaccine preventable diseases, so it's important for them to get all their vaccines at the recommended ages.

Children can catch these illnesses from any number of people or places, including from parents, brothers or sisters, visitors to their home, on playgrounds or even at the grocery store. Regardless of whether or not your baby is cared for outside the home, she comes in contact with people throughout the day, some of whom may be sick but not know it yet.

If someone has a vaccine preventable disease, they may not have symptoms or the symptoms may be mild, and they can end up spreading disease to babies or young children. Remember, many of these diseases can be especially dangerous to young children so it is safest to vaccinate your child at the recommended ages to protect her, whether or not she is in child care.

Content source: [Answers to Your Most Common Questions about Childhood Vaccines | CDC](#)

The school year will be upon us soon, don't wait to get your child vaccinated!

Thank you for what you today and every day!