

The benefits of immunizing your child

Keep your child safe.

Get all vaccines on time.

By getting all the vaccines on time, your child can be protected from many diseases over a lifetime.

Immunization has saved more lives in Canada in the last 50 years than any other health measure.

Vaccines protect children from serious illness, disability and death. Be sure your children get all their vaccines on time.

Does immunizing my child protect others?

Yes. If your child is immune to a disease, your child cannot get sick and infect others. Getting your child immunized will help protect:

- Your family, friends and neighbours
- Young babies
- Seniors
- People with diseases such as cancer or other medical conditions

How do vaccines protect my child?

Vaccines prevent diseases that can cause lifelong damage. For example, meningococcal disease can cause brain damage, kidney damage, deafness and loss of limbs. About 1 in 10 people who get the disease will die. Vaccines protect your child from harm caused by many diseases.

Will vaccines protect my child now and in the future?

Yes, vaccines will protect your child now and in the future. Your child is exposed to germs every day. Germs can spread easily in crowded places including:

- Daycare or preschool
- School, college or university
- Waiting room at a doctor's office
- Community centre, concert or event
- Summer camp
- A bus or an airplane
- Countries outside of Canada

Are vaccines safe?

Yes, vaccines are very safe. It is safer to get the vaccine than to get the disease it prevents. Here are some things you should know about vaccines:

- Serious side effects from vaccines are very rare
- The most common side effects are soreness in the arm or leg where the vaccine is given and a low fever that may last for a few days. Up to half of children who get a vaccine may experience these side effects
- Children with a fever may have a seizure, but this is rare. These seizures are generally not harmful. For more information on febrile seizures, also known as fever seizures, visit [HealthLinkBC File #112 Febrile seizures \(fever seizures\)](#)
- There is an extremely rare possibility, less than one in a million, of a life-threatening allergic reaction after getting a vaccine. If this happens, your health care provider is prepared to treat this reaction

What happens if my child does not get immunized?

Vaccines work very well when most parents get their children immunized. However, some

parents have chosen not to immunize their children. When this happens, preventable diseases can come back quickly and many children can get sick. Some children may even die. This has happened in Canada, England, Sweden, Japan and other countries.

Make sure your child gets all their vaccines and gets them on time.

For more information

For more information on childhood immunization, visit:

- [HealthLinkBC File #50a Your baby's immune system and vaccines](#)
- [HealthLinkBC File #50c Childhood vaccines are safe](#)
- [HealthLinkBC File #50d Childhood vaccines: what is in the vaccines and why](#)
- [HealthLinkBC File #50e A better immunization experience for your child](#)



BC Centre for Disease Control
Provincial Health Services Authority

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