



Immunization **protects** children

Immunization protects children against many diseases, such as:

- Diphtheria
- Whooping Cough
- Tetanus
- Polio
- Haemophilus Influenzae type b
- Pneumococcal pneumonia
- Meningococcal disease
- Chickenpox
- Measles
- Mumps
- Rubella
- Influenza

Immunization protects

Immunizing your children protects them against many serious diseases.

How do vaccines work?

Vaccines help our bodies to fight against diseases. Vaccines are made from small amounts of the germs that cause a disease. These germs are weakened or killed, so they can't harm us. We naturally fight off germs that enter our bodies, so we fight off what is in the vaccine. Later, if we encounter the whole, live germs, our bodies are ready to fight right away. This is called being immune. Our bodies can kill off these germs before they can make us sick.

At what ages should I have my child immunized?

The ages are shown in the chart on the back cover. The first vaccines are given at 2 months of age. Some immunizations need more than one dose of the vaccine. For example, some of the vaccines that your child gets at 2 months are given again at 4 months, 6 months, 12 months or 18 months. They need all doses to be fully protected.

Are vaccines safe for my child?

Yes, they are very safe. Most children have no serious reaction. Some children get a sore arm or leg from the needle. Some get a slight fever. The risk of having a disease that the vaccine can prevent is far greater than the risk of a serious reaction.

Why should I have my child immunized? Haven't most of these diseases been eliminated?

We see fewer cases of these diseases here in Nova Scotia, but they have not disappeared. Most people are immunized, so we don't get these diseases very often in Canada. But these diseases are still a big concern in some countries. We can catch these diseases when we travel. The germs are still around us. It is still important to be immunized.

Can vaccines weaken my child's immune system?

No. The human body naturally fights off germs. Germs are everywhere—in food, in the air, in water, on surfaces. Vaccines prepare our bodies to fight off the germs that cause serious diseases. Vaccines make your child's immune system stronger.



Immunization, vaccination, shots—these all mean getting a vaccine.

Can children taking antibiotics still be immunized?

Yes, as long as they have no fever. There are very few reasons for delaying immunization. Talk to your health care provider or public health nurse if you wonder if your child is well enough.

If my child is in good health and eats healthy food, will this protect them from the diseases listed on the front cover?

No. Healthy children can better fight off germs, but they can still catch diseases. They can still suffer complications from these diseases. Healthy eating—including breastfeeding—helps keep your child healthy, but it does not replace the need for immunization.

I have more questions. Where can I find more information?

Call your health care provider or a Public Health office near you.

- Amherst 902-667-3319 or
1-800-767-3319
- Antigonish 902-867-4500 ext. 4800
- Bridgewater 902-543-0850
- Dartmouth 902-481-5800
- New Glasgow 902-752-5151
- Sydney 902-563-2400
- Truro 902-893-5820
- Wolfville 902-542-6310
- Yarmouth 902-742-7141

For more information about immunization in Nova Scotia, visit DHW Immunization page at novascotia.ca/dhw/cdpc/immunization.asp

For more information on immunization visit the websites of Immunize Canada, the Public Health Agency of Canada, and the Canadian Paediatric Society:

- immunize.ca
- phac-aspc.gc.ca
- cps.ca

Childhood immunizations have changed in the past few years. This schedule reflects these changes and may be different from what you or your children have received in the past. The immunizations shown on this schedule are those that are given *free of charge*. **High-risk children may be eligible for additional vaccines.**

You can get information on childhood immunizations and whether your child is eligible for additional vaccines from your local Public Health office or health care provider.

Adults and school-age children also need immunizations. To find out more about this, talk to your health care provider or a public health nurse in your local Public Health office. You'll find Immunization Schedules for adults and school-age children at novascotia.ca/dhw/cdpc/immunization.asp

When should I have my child immunized?

		SCHEDULE					
		2 months	4 months	6 months	12 months	18 months	4-6 years
VACCINES	DTaP-IPV-Hib <i>Diphtheria, tetanus, acellular pertussis (whooping cough), polio, and Haemophilus influenzae type b vaccine</i>	✓	✓	✓		✓	
	Pneumo Conj. <i>Pneumococcal conjugate vaccine</i>	✓	✓		✓		
	Men C Conj. <i>Meningococcal group C conjugate vaccine</i>				✓		
	MMRV* <i>Measles, mumps, rubella and varicella vaccine</i>				✓	✓*	✓*
	Tdap-IPV <i>Tetanus, diphtheria, acellular pertussis (whooping cough), and polio vaccine</i>						✓

*The second dose of MMRV can be given only once between 18 months and 6 years of age.

Seasonal flu vaccine is free for all Nova Scotians. It is recommended for all adults and children EXCEPT for babies under 6 months. Seasonal flu vaccine is strongly recommended for anyone who lives with or takes care of a child under 5 years, and for anyone living in a home where a newborn is expected during influenza season (October to April). This includes both adults and older children. Seasonal flu vaccine is also strongly recommended for children with a health condition that places them at high risk and for anyone who lives with or takes care of these children. Children under 9 years old getting their first flu vaccine need 2 doses. For more information about seasonal flu vaccine, see: novascotia.ca/DHW/CDPC/flu.asp

Disclaimer: Each province has its own immunization schedule. The Nova Scotia schedule may vary slightly from the recommendations of the National Advisory Committee on Immunization (NACI): phac-aspc.gc.ca/naci-ccni/index-eng.php

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