

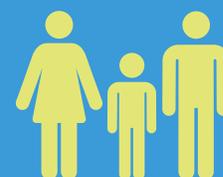
The Truth About Vaccines



In the past few years, there has been a lot of confusion about vaccines. With so much information in the news and online it's hard to know what's true and what's not. Here are some of the **facts** about vaccines. Be sure to ask your healthcare professional about which vaccines are right for you.

Vaccines are not just for children.

- There are many recommended vaccines for adults. They depend on your age and whether or not you have any health conditions.
- Some vaccines we received as children get weaker in our bodies over time (like the tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis vaccine—also called “Tdap”), so it is important to get them again as teens and adults.
- There are some vaccines available now that may not have been available when you were a child (like chickenpox).

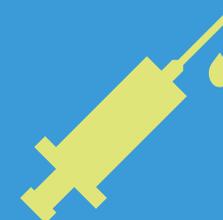


Some serious diseases have been wiped out, but **many** still exist.

- Some diseases have been wiped out in the U.S. because of vaccination (like polio and smallpox) but there are still many diseases that continue to make people of all ages sick. In fact, they can cause serious health problems and even death.
- Some of these include
 - Flu
 - Measles
 - Shingles
 - Pneumonia
 - Tetanus
 - Human papillomavirus (HPV)

The flu shot works.

- The shot is worth getting every year. The flu can be very dangerous and can cause serious illness or death. The vaccine can reduce the risk of flu by 40%-60% every year.
- The flu shot changes every year to try to match which type of flu will spread that year. So, it's important to get an annual flu shot.
- If you received the vaccine and still get the flu, your symptoms can be less severe.



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Vaccines do not make you sick.

- Vaccines usually can't make you sick, but sometimes do have side effects.
- Side effects are usually not serious and include things like a sore arm, low grade fever, or other mild symptoms.

Vaccines do not cause autism.

- There is **no** proven link between vaccines and autism.
- Many different studies have shown this.
- One study that suggested there was a link between vaccines and autism has been proven wrong many different times.



Vaccines/the HPV vaccine do not cause infertility (trouble having kids).

- Research has **not** shown a link between vaccines, including the HPV vaccine, and infertility.
- In fact, the HPV vaccine helps protect women from future fertility problems. The vaccine can prevent cervical cancer. Cervical cancer may lead to infertility.

Vaccines can be affordable and are sometimes free.

- The cost of vaccines depends on your health insurance plan, but in some cases, you can get them for free.
- Talk to your healthcare professional if you do not have health insurance. You may still be able to get vaccines at low- or no- cost.



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Even if you don't get sick a lot, you are still always at risk for getting sick.

- You are always at risk for getting sick. This is true even if you don't get sick very often or if you eat well and exercise.
- You may not have any symptoms, but you can still spread the disease to others. Getting vaccinated can help prevent you from spreading illness to your loved ones and your community.

Even after recovering from a serious illness, you can still get sick again.

- Unfortunately, even if you have gotten better from a serious illness, it doesn't mean you won't get sick again. Getting vaccinated can help you stay healthy.



Getting treated for a disease can cost more than getting vaccinated.

- Some diseases, such as measles, can't be treated.
- Many diseases can cause serious and long-term problems. For example, shingles can lead to chronic nerve pain, scarring on your skin, or vision/hearing loss.
- Treating an infection may cost much more than getting vaccinated.

You have time to get vaccinated.

- Getting vaccinated only takes a few minutes of your time. It can save you from an illness that can disrupt your life for much longer.
- You don't have to make a doctor's appointment.
 - Many pharmacies and urgent care centers now offer on the spot vaccinations. Call ahead to make sure they are in stock.
 - Always update your primary care professional on any vaccines you receive so he or she can keep a record.

