Immunize your child

www.ProvidenceHealthPlan.com/immunizations
Why should my child be vaccinated?

Vaccination is the best way to protect your son or daughter from serious infection and the best way to keep potentially deadly diseases from spreading. We believe immunizing your child makes the most sense for his or her health and well-being – as well as for the health and well-being of the larger community.

I’ve heard that some diseases are making a comeback. Is this true?

Yes. The United States has seen a resurgence in serious diseases such as pertussis, more commonly known as whooping cough, and measles in the past few years. The return of these deadly illnesses is due in part to parents choosing not to vaccinate their children. Without antibodies to fight off infection, unvaccinated children become sick and spread the disease to other vulnerable groups: infants who cannot be vaccinated until 6 months of age; seniors; individuals with weakened immune systems; and other children who have not been vaccinated.

Can I wait to vaccinate until my child is older?

We recommended you follow the schedule of vaccines published by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, or CDC. Creating your own schedule by omitting or delaying specific shots may leave your child vulnerable to disease. An infant’s immune system is not fully developed, making it easier for bacteria and viruses to multiply.

When should my child receive his or her vaccines?

Ask your child’s health care provider at each visit if your son or daughter is due for any vaccines. Keep the attached schedule as a helpful reference. As a Providence Health Plan member, your child is eligible for 12 well-child visits from birth through age 2 ½ (30 months) and one well-child visit annually after age 3. One of the most important but often overlooked vaccines is the fourth DTaP vaccination, given to children between 15 and 18 months.

www.ProvidenceHealthPlan.com/immunizations
**Are vaccines safe?**

Yes. Before being introduced to the public, vaccines go through a rigorous testing process. Monitoring of vaccines continues when they are administered to the public.

**I've heard vaccines cause autism. Is this true?**

No credible link has been found between vaccines and autism. Years of research have turned up no evidence to suggest that vaccinating your child leads to autism.

**What are the side effects of vaccines?**

If experienced at all, side effects are usually minor and include redness and swelling at the injection site. Some children also may experience a low-grade fever – a sign their body is reacting normally to the vaccine.

**I don’t want my child to feel the pain of a shot.**

The minor pain from a shot is fleeting and far less painful than dealing with the symptoms and consequences of disease. Some health care providers recommend giving your child an over-the-counter pain reliever to help ease the pain or fussiness from the vaccination.

**What are the risks of not vaccinating my child?**

Children who are not vaccinated are at a lifetime risk for catching a disease if they come into contact with the bacteria or virus, even if the person carrying that bacteria or virus has no symptoms. While many diseases are treatable, some can have serious long-term consequences and may even lead to death.

If you travel, abstaining from or delaying vaccines can leave your child vulnerable in communities for which vaccination isn’t routine or commonplace.

**Can my child receive more than one vaccine at a visit?**

Yes, your child can receive more than one vaccine and also may receive a combination vaccine, which includes multiple vaccines in one shot.
### Recommended immunizations for children from birth through 6 years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>HepB</th>
<th>RV</th>
<th>DTaP</th>
<th>Hib</th>
<th>PCV</th>
<th>IPV</th>
<th>HepA</th>
<th>MMR</th>
<th>Varicella</th>
<th>Infl uenza (yearly)*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Birth</strong></td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>HepB</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>HepB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>1 month</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2 months</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4 months</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>6 months</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>12 months</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>15 months</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>18 months</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>19-23 months</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2-3 years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>4-6 years</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td>RV</td>
<td>DTaP</td>
<td>Hib</td>
<td>PCV</td>
<td>IPV</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Shaded boxes indicate the vaccine can be given during shown age range.

† Children 2 years old and older with certain medical conditions may need a dose of pneumococcal vaccine (PPSV) and meningococcal vaccine (MCV4).

* Two doses given at least four weeks apart are recommended for children ages 6 months through 8 years who are getting a flu vaccine for the first time.

§ Two doses of HepA vaccine are needed for lasting protection. The first dose of HepA vaccine should be given between 12 months and 23 months of age. The second dose should be given 6 to 18 months later. HepA vaccination may be given to any child 12 months and older to protect against HepA. Children and adolescents who did not receive the HepA vaccine and are at high risk, should be vaccinated against HepA.

HepB for hepatitis B; RV for rotavirus; DTaP for diphtheria, pertussis and tetanus; Hib for haemophilus influenzae type b; PCV for pneumococcal disease; IPV for polio; Infl uenza for flu; MMR for measles, mumps and rubella; varicella for chickenpox; HepA for hepatitis A.
A message from
Providence Health Plan’s
Medical Director

Immunization is one way you can give your child a head start on the road to health and happiness. Babies need extra care and protection during their first 24 months of life, and vaccines offer the best protection against unwanted disease. Ask your child’s health care provider at each visit if your son or daughter is due for any vaccines.

Protection against some diseases requires more than one shot, so be sure your child receives all vaccines in a series for full protection. Combination vaccines may be available, which may mean fewer shots and fewer visits.

For more information, visit www.ProvidenceHealthPlan.com/immunizations.

Sincerely,

James H. MacKay, M.D.
Medical Director
Providence Health Plan