



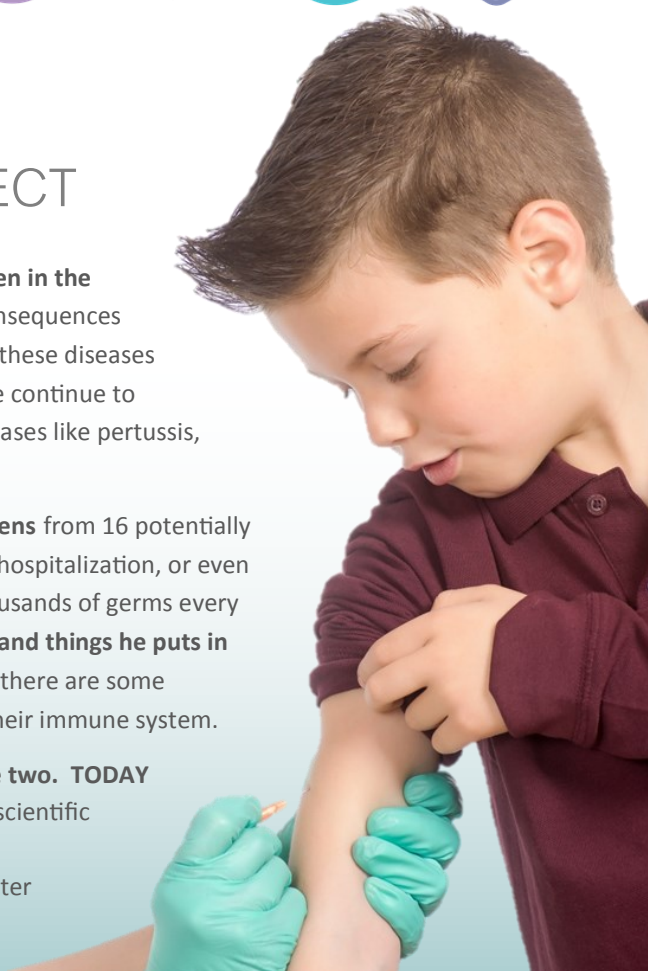
HealthyPeople

IMMUNIZATION • POWER TO PROTECT

Immunizations have had an enormous impact on improving the health of children in the United States. Most parents today have never seen first-hand the devastating consequences that vaccine-preventable diseases have on a child, a family, or community. While these diseases are not common in the U.S., they persist around the world. It is important that we continue to protect our children with vaccines because outbreaks of vaccine-preventable diseases like pertussis, mumps, and measles can and do occur in this country

Vaccination is one of the best ways parents can protect infants, children, and teens from 16 potentially harmful diseases. Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious, may require hospitalization, or even be deadly — especially in infants and young children. Your child is exposed to thousands of germs every day in his environment. **This happens through the food he eats, air he breathes, and things he puts in his mouth.** Babies are born with immune systems that can fight most germs, but there are some deadly diseases they can't handle. That's why they need vaccines to strengthen their immune system.

30 YEARS AGO vaccines used 3,000 antigens to protect against 8 diseases by age two. TODAY vaccines use 305 antigens to protect against 14 diseases by age two. Thanks to scientific advances, today's vaccines can protect children from more diseases using fewer antigens. Vaccines contain only a tiny fraction of the antigens that babies encounter in their environment every day.



QUESTIONS PARENTS SHOULD ASK ABOUT VACCINES

WHY DOES MY CHILD NEED THE HPV VACCINE?

HPV vaccine is important because it protects against cancers caused by human papillomavirus (HPV) infection. HPV is a very common virus; nearly 80 million people—about one in four—are currently infected in the United States. About 14 million people, including teens, become infected with HPV each year.



Most people with HPV never develop symptoms or health problems. Most HPV infections (9 out of 10) go away by themselves within two years. But, sometimes, HPV infections will last longer, and can cause certain cancers and other diseases.

Every year in the United States, HPV causes 30,700 cancers in men and women. HPV vaccination can prevent most of the cancers (about 28,000) from occurring.

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD BE VACCINATED?

All kids who are 11 or 12 years old should get two shots of HPV vaccine six to twelve months apart. Adolescents who receive their two shots less than five months apart will require a third dose of HPV vaccine.

If your teen hasn't gotten the vaccine yet, talk to their doctor or nurse about getting it for them as soon as possible. If your child is older than 14 years, three shots will need to be given over 6 months. Also, three doses are still recommended for people with certain immunocompromising conditions aged 9 through 26 years.

Adults should consider vaccine boosters. You're never too old to get vaccines. In fact, sticking to an immunization schedule as you age gives you the best shot at long-term health. If you're not sure of your immunization status, talk to your doctor.

Source: www.cdc.org