

# Childhood Immunizations

Protecting Your Child  
from Disease

WILLAMETTE VALLEY MEDICAL CENTER BIRTHING CENTER



# HELPING THE BODY

## recognize and fight infection

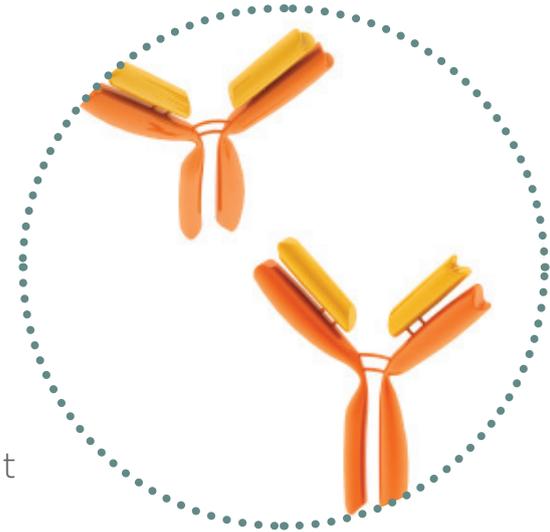
**What is a vaccination?** Everyone is born with an immune system to fight off bad bacteria and viruses. Our immune system recognizes germs in our bodies and in response produces a protein substance called antibodies to fight them. Antibodies disappear after they fight off the virus, but they become

“memory cells,” which remember the original virus and defend it when it returns. **This protection is called immunity.**

Vaccinations contain the same parts of

the virus that cause disease, but the virus is either killed or weakened so that when it is injected, it is not strong enough to cause illness.

The presence of the weakened virus is enough for the antibodies to fight them and create memory cells so that if the virus returns, the immune system can fight them off and prevent illness.



Antibodies fight off disease

After fighting off  
viruses, antibodies  
turn into  
“memory cells”

## WHEN SHOULD I VACCINATE?

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These vaccinations begin at birth and will continue throughout your child's life. Be sure to keep your child's immunizations records because they will prove to be important.

## SIDE EFFECTS

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Vaccines have the possibility of causing minor side effects, such as pain or soreness at the injection site, and occasionally a low-grade fever that will go away within a few days. You can breastfeed your baby if you are concerned about the pain your infant will feel after an immunization. While vaccines can cause side effects, they are monitored for safety. Not immunizing your child can put them at an even greater risk.

## Why Immunize?

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Not only do immunizations protect your child, but they also protect those around your child, especially those people who are not immunized. Immunizing your child will help protect her or him from many harmful diseases, including:

- Hepatitis B (HepB)
- Diphtheria (DTaP)
- Tetanus or lockjaw (DTaP)
- Pertussis or whooping cough (DTaP)
- Hib (H. influenza type b) disease (Hib)
- Polio (IPV)
- Influenza
- Hepatitis A (HepA)
- Measles (MMR)
- Mumps (MMR)
- Rotavirus (Rota)
- Rubella or German measles (MMR)
- Varicella zoster or chickenpox
- Pneumococcal disease (PCV)

# Vaccine Schedule

After your baby is born, your body naturally produces different types of breast milk in stages that coincide perfectly with the nutritional needs of your baby at the different stages of development.



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## Hepatitis B

Birth to two months  
One to four months  
Six to 18 months

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## Tetanus

Two months  
Four months  
Six months  
Fifteen months  
Four to six years

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## H. Influenza Type B

Two months  
Four months  
Six months  
One year to 15 months



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## Polio

Two months  
Four months  
Six months  
Four years

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## Hepatitis A

One year to 23 months,  
first and second doses  
at least six months apart  
Two years

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## Rubella/German Measles

One year to 15 months  
Four years

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## Rotavirus

Two months  
Four months  
Six months



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## Pneumococcal Disease

Two months  
Four months  
Six months  
One year to 15 months

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## Influenza

Six to 59 months  
(recommended yearly)

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## Varicella (Chickenpox)

One year to 18 months  
Four to six years



## Comfort During Shots

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Hold your child and cuddle him or her. Speak calmly and soothingly.

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Bring along a favorite toy or blanket.

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Make eye contact and smile at your baby.

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Stay calm; your baby picks up on your anxieties.

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After the shot, calmly sooth your child. For breastfed babies, nursing right after a shot can be very comforting.

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A cool wet cloth can reduce redness, soreness, and/or swelling at the site.

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If you have any concerns about the safety of vaccines, please speak with your pediatrician.  
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**Resources:**

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov)

A New Beginning: Your Personal Guide to Postpartum Care



**WILLAMETTE VALLEY  
MEDICAL CENTER**

2700 Stratus Avenue  
McMinnville, OR 97128  
[www.wvmcweb.com](http://www.wvmcweb.com)