UtahStateUniversity
COOPERATIVE EXTENSION

ALL TOTS NEED THEIR SHOTS!

IMMUNIZE BY TWO

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WHY IMMUNIZE?

No one likes their child to be sick. Immunizations can help keep our children safe from deadly and preventable diseases. Immunizations are the most powerful health tool that has ever been developed.

TELL ME ABOUT THE DISEASES & WHY WE VACCINATE NOW?

In the early 1920s, diphtheria was one of the most dreaded childhood diseases in the United States, killing over 10,000 children a year. In the late 1930s and early 1940s we started vaccinating children against diphtheria and the disease started to disappear. Today this disease is rare.

So why vaccinate if the disease is rare? Although it may be rare in the United States the disease may be common somewhere else in the world. A few years ago in California, a boy caught diphtheria and he died. He was the only one in his class who hadn't been vaccinated.

In 1962, one year before the vaccine was introduced, over 500,000 cases of measles were reported in the U.S. Ten years later only 32,000 cases were reported, and ten years after that only 2,000 cases were reported. In 1998 and 1999, only 100 measles cases were reported for each year.

Smallpox was one of the most devastating diseases the world has ever known. Millions died from it each year. In 1967, war was declared on small pox from the World Health Organization and with a worldwide vaccination campaign, twelve years later smallpox was wiped out.

Tens of thousands were paralyzed or killed by polio in the 1950s. Now the fight against polio is almost won.

In the 1980s, 20,000 children a year suffered from meningitis and other complications as a result of Hib disease.

These diseases aren't as common now as they once were. Without immunizations could still be the leading cause of pneumonia, choking, brain damage, heart problems, liver cancer, and blindness in children who are not immune. They still kill children every year, even in the U.S.

There are 12 potentially serious diseases that vaccines protect against: measles, mumps, rubella, diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, polio, hepatitis B, varicella, hepatitis A, and pneumoncoccal disease. At least one shot is needed for each of these diseases, and for some, several doses are required for the best protection.

This adds up to a lot of shots. But, several are given at one time. Vaccines are safe and effective if they are given together or separate.

How Do Vaccinations Work?

When we get sick, our bodies are invaded with germs. It's the immune systems job to help protect us from these germs. This is how it works: Germs enter our bodies and then reproduce and multiply. Our immune system then fights against these invaders with antibodies (proteins that are made from our immune system). Antibodies are very busy with two jobs: first, they help destroy germs that make us sick, and second, they protect us from future infections. For example: we may be exposed to these diseases many times throughout our lives, but because we are immune they will not re-infect us.

With vaccinations, they are made with the germs that may cause the disease, but the germs have been altered so that we will not get sick from them. They just enter our immune system to ward off future infections. The vaccine is entered into the body, usually with injections. The immune system reacts the same as it would if it were being invaded by the disease, by making antibodies. These antibodies stay in our bodies providing us immunity.

When Is the Best Time to Give My Child Shots?

The best time to vaccinate children is before the age of two. Vaccines are given at an early age because the diseases they prevent can strike at an early age. Also, some of the diseases are far more series and common among infants and young children.

It isn't to late to vaccinate an older child. If you are behind on their shots or neglected to get them while they were young, do it now. The nurse will put the child on an accelerated schedule to complete the series of shots.

What Are the Chances of My Child Being Exposed to These Diseases?

It depends! Some diseases are very rare, while others are fairly common. But, by immunizing your child, your are protecting other children from these diseases. Sometimes shots don't always work (there is only a 1-9% chance they may not).

Dr. Louis Z. Cooper, the president of American Academy of Pediatrics said, ". . . We encourage you to have your children immunized against deadly, preventable diseases." Dr. Cooper, also stated: "The fact that you don't see those diseases anymore simply means the vaccines are working, but they will only continue to work if we continue to immunize our children."

How Much Will this Cost?

Vaccines may be free if you qualify. Some public health clinics charge a small fee. Check with your health department, and ask about their "Vaccines for Children" program to see if you qualify.

Suggestions for Parents on Days of Vaccinations

The law requires the doctor or clinic to give you the VIS. The VIS will tell you more about each vaccine.

Take your child's record. It's an important document, which can help you know what shots have been given and what needs to be given.

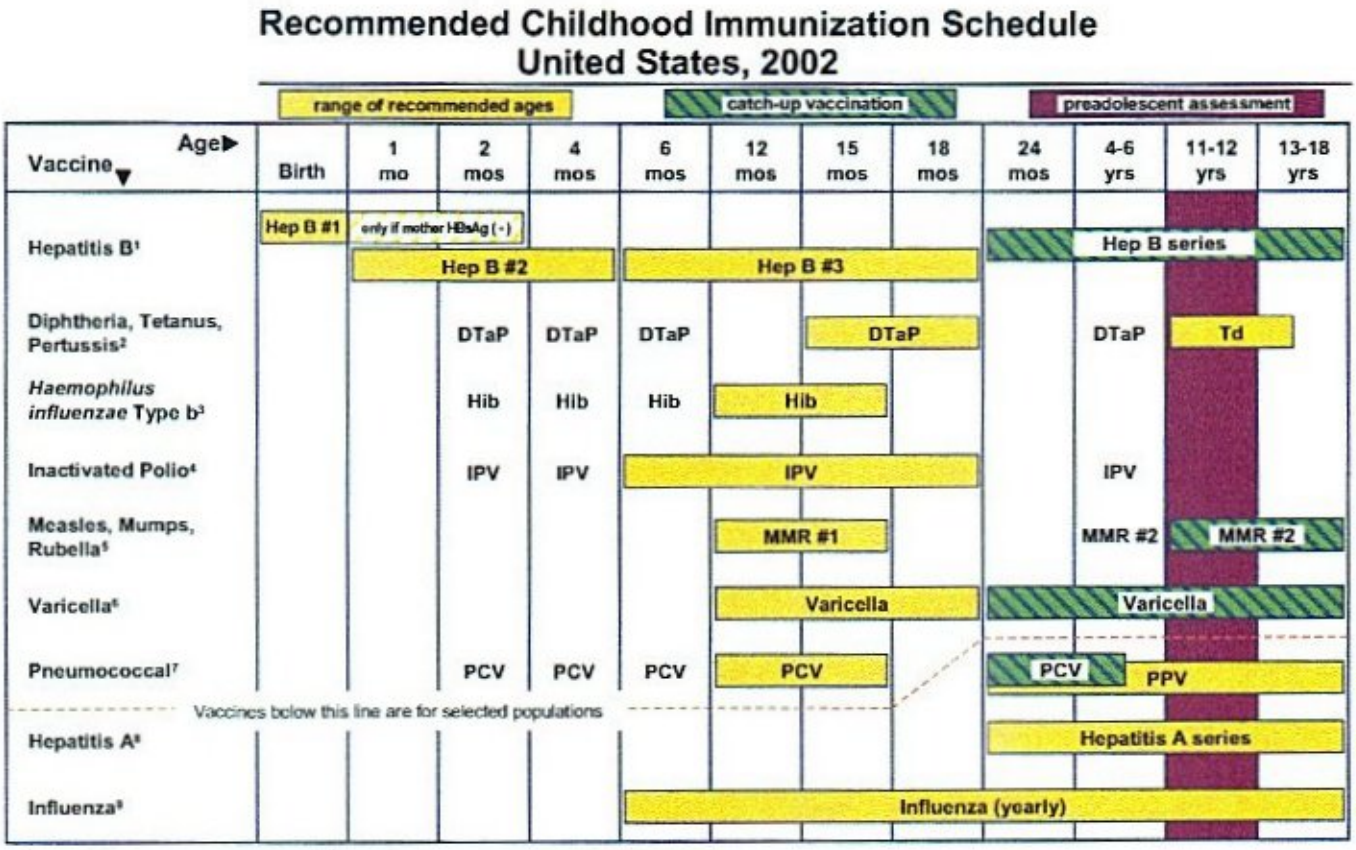
Shot records are required for entry in school, college and for international travel.

Prepare your child. Be truthful, shots are painful, but only for a moment.

Hold and comfort your child.

Who Can You Contact for Questions?

If you have any questions, call the ***Immunize by Two*** hotline at 1-800-275-0659.



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