

Childhood Immunisations Campaign 2024

Why should my child be vaccinated?

Childhood infections like measles and whooping cough are rising. Such infections can have a big impact of your child's life. They can miss out on school, be hospitalised, and experience life-long complications or tragically, death. If your child isn't vaccinated, they're not protected against these infections.

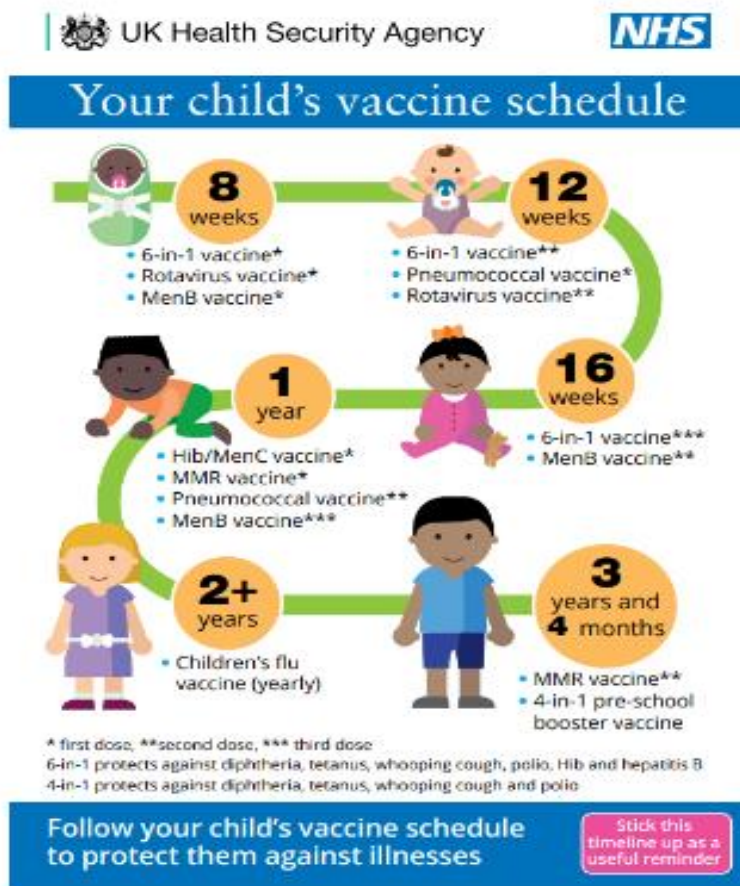
What is Measles – an infection that spreads very quickly by coughing and sneezing. Symptoms include high temperature, headache, cough, red sore eyes, spots in the mouth and a rash.

What is Whooping Cough – an infection of the lungs and breathing tubes. Symptoms include a cough that may make a “whoop” sound, gasping for breath, difficulties breathing.

It's important that you take up the offer for your child to be vaccinated as soon as they are offered to you to make sure your child has the best protection. If you are unsure whether your child is up to date you can check their red book or speak to your GP. If vaccinations are outstanding or due the GP surgery will book your child an appointment.

All childhood vaccinations are free, they are offered by the NHS and have been used in millions of children worldwide. They are safe and effective. If you

When should my child be vaccinated?



This picture shows you what vaccines your child should have and when. Sometimes booster doses are required so your child may receive more than one dose of a vaccination.

The full schedule can be accessed here [NHS website here.](#)

Frequently Asked Questions

How do vaccines work?

Vaccines work by causing the body's immune system to develop memory to that infection. If your child comes into contact with the infection, the body will recognise it and can rapidly fight off infection and disease to protect them.

Is it safe to have several vaccinations in one go?

Yes. Studies have shown that it is safe to have several vaccinations at the same time and your baby will be protected as soon as possible from some very serious infections.

My child is unwell – can they still go for their vaccination?

If your child has a minor illness without a fever, such as a cold, they should have their immunisations as normal.

If your child is ill with a fever, put off the immunisation until the child has recovered.

Will catching the disease make my child's immune system stronger than a vaccine?

There is no other proven, effective way to immunise your child against infectious disease without experiencing the serious risk of that infection.

Why does my child need multiple doses of some vaccines?

Most immunisations have to be given more than once to prepare your child's immunity

How do we know that vaccines are safe?

Before a vaccine is allowed to be used, its safety and effectiveness have to be thoroughly tested and they are continuously monitored. All routine vaccines in the NHS programme have been used in millions of children worldwide and have an excellent safety record.

Will there be any side effects from the vaccines?

Any side effects that occur are usually mild and short lived. Your child may get a little redness, swelling or tenderness where the injection was given that will disappear on its own.

There is advice for parents on what to expect after vaccination here: [What to expect after vaccinations - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/what-to-expect-after-vaccinations)

I'm worried that my child may have allergies. Can they be vaccinated?

Very rarely, children can have an allergic reaction soon after immunisation. This reaction may be a rash or itching affecting part or all of the body. The doctor or nurse giving the vaccine will know how to treat this. It does not mean that your child should stop having immunisations.

What if my child has an underlying health condition?

There are very few reasons why babies cannot be immunised. Vaccines should not be given to babies who have had a confirmed anaphylactic reaction to either a previous dose of the vaccine, or to any contents of that vaccine.

- **Immunosuppressed children**

In general, children whose immune system does not work properly because they are having treatment for a serious condition such as transplant or cancer, or who have a condition which affects the immune system should not receive certain live vaccines.

If this applies to your child, you must tell your doctor, practice nurse or health visitor before the immunisation. These children can be best protected by ensuring those around them, for example their siblings, are fully vaccinated.

Can I check my child is up to date with their vaccinations?

If you are not sure if your child has had all their routine vaccinations, check their personal health record (Red Book) or contact the GP practice.

If your child is going abroad, make sure their routine immunisations are up to date. Your child may also need extra immunisations and you may also need to take other precautions.

How can I catch up if my child has missed any vaccinations?

If you miss the appointment or need to delay the immunisation, make a new appointment. You can pick up the immunisation schedule where it stopped without having to start again.

Do any routine childhood vaccines contain pork?

Porcine gelatine is found in two of the vaccines routinely given to children: the MMR vaccine and the nasal influenza vaccine.

In the UK we have two MMR vaccines. Both work very well, one contains porcine gelatine and the other doesn't. If you want your child to have the porcine gelatine free vaccine discuss it with your practice nurse or GP.