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If your child has had a serious reaction to the first shot in a series of shots, your family doctor will probably talk with you about the pros and cons of giving him or her the rest of the shots in the series. Talk to your doctor if you have any questions about whether your child should receive a vaccine.

**When To Vaccinate Your Child**

Vaccinations usually start when your child is two months old and most are finished by the time he or she is six years old. Children must get at least some vaccines before they may attend school.6

As your child gets older and starts to do things like attend summer camp, you should also make sure he or she is up to date on recommended vaccines, including the flu vaccine.

In addition, if you are planning to travel internationally, remember that vaccinations are required for entry into some countries. Before you travel, check the CDC Travelers’ Health web site to find out if your destination recommends or requires certain vaccines. Always bring your family’s immunization records with you when you travel.

Recommendations about when to have your child vaccinated change over time. You can get a copy of the most current child and adolescent vaccination schedules from the American Academy of Family Physicians, the American Academy of Pediatrics, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), or from your family doctor.

**Are Vaccines Really Safe?**

There has been intense discussion about whether vaccines are safe or harmful, especially for children. Some parents worry that vaccines are not safe and may ask their health care provider to wait. They may even choose not to have their child vaccinated.

However, vaccines have made many serious childhood diseases rare today. The American Academy of Pediatrics, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, and the Institute of Medicine all conclude that the benefits of vaccines far outweigh their risks. Here are some of the reasons why:

1. Vaccines are tested and monitored. Vaccines are tested before being licensed by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). Both the CDC and FDA continue to monitor vaccines after they are licensed.

2. Vaccine side effects are usually mild and temporary. The most common side effects include soreness, redness or swelling at the injection site. Severe side effects are rare.

3. Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health. Even people taking prescription medications can be vaccinated.

4. Vaccines can reduce your chance of getting certain diseases. Vaccines work with the body’s natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease and reduce the chances of getting certain diseases and suffering from their complications.

For instance, Hepatitis B vaccine can also reduce the risk of liver cancer. HPV vaccine reduces the risk of cervical cancer.

5. Vaccines reduce your chance of spreading disease. Infants and people with weakened immune systems (like those undergoing cancer treatment) are especially vulnerable to infectious disease. For example, newborns are too young to be vaccinated against whooping cough but it can be very dangerous or even deadly for them.

**Resources**

www.liveandworkwell.com

To find related information search under the word “vaccines” to link to resources and articles for kids, teens and parents.

Ask your health benefits representative for your access code to liveandworkwell.com.

The information, advice, treatments and therapeutic approaches in this article are provided for informational and educational purposes only. Consult with your doctor or mental health provider for specific health care needs, treatment or medications. Certain treatments may not be covered under your benefit, so check with your health plan regarding your coverage of services. We do not recommend or endorse any treatment, medication, suggested approach, specific or otherwise, nor any organization, entity, or resource material that may be named herein. Except for Liveandworkwell.com, no other site identified herein is affiliated or controlled by us. You will be subject to the terms of use, privacy terms and policies of any site you may visit.

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2. Ibid, “Vaccine-Preventable Childhood Diseases.”
5. Ibid, “Childhood Vaccines.”