

Vaccines, like other medications, may cause side effects. However, years of experience with vaccines have shown that the risk of permanent damage from a vaccine preventable disease is to be many times greater than from any vaccine. When vaccine reactions do occur, they are usually mild.

**Caution:** Pregnant women, or women who plan to become pregnant within three months of receiving vaccines, should consult their doctor.

## Keep Immunization Records

All states have immunization laws for school and day care entrance and a personal immunization record must be presented when a child is registered. Ask your doctor or public health department for a copy of your immunization records. It is important to keep an up-to-date record for everyone in your family. The immunization record card is available from your doctor or public health department.

The Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR) is an electronic database that was developed to help families keep track of immunization records and help them follow the recommended schedule. It also helps providers remind parents when immunizations are due or a clinic appointment is missed.

You may view your child's immunization record from your computer on the Wisconsin Immunization Registry (WIR). The Internet address is <http://dhfswir.org>.

## The Wisconsin Immunization Law

Wisconsin's immunization law requires children in licensed day care centers and students through grade 12 to be immunized against certain diseases according to their age or grade level. Students must provide dates (month, day and year) of immunizations upon admission to school, or be subject to exclusion or legal action. A fine of up to \$25 per day may be imposed for non-compliance with the law. Waivers are available for medical, religious, or personal conviction reasons.



**For more information about immunizations, contact your doctor or nearest local public health department.**

**You may also visit the Wisconsin Immunization Program's web site at:**  
<http://www.dhs.wisconsin.gov/immunization/index.htm>



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# Protect for a lifetime . . . Immunize



In the past, measles, mumps, polio, and other infectious diseases threatened every family. Many people suffered serious complications and many died. Today, all of these diseases are preventable with vaccines, but some children and adults remain unimmunized, risking serious illness.

## Vaccine-preventable Diseases are Serious

**Measles** is a serious vaccine-preventable disease. Three out of 10 cases develop pneumonia. Encephalitis (inflammation of the brain) occurs once in every 1,000 cases, and may cause permanent brain damage or death.



**Mumps** can result in hearing loss and inflamed testicles. Sterility is possible, but rare.

**Rubella** is usually mild in children, but is dangerous for a woman during her first three months of pregnancy. Birth defects such as glaucoma, cataracts, deafness, and brain damage can result (Congenital Rubella Syndrome). All women of childbearing age should receive the rubella vaccine, unless they have had a test which shows that they are protected.

**Polio** can cause permanent paralysis and sometimes death. Although immunization has nearly wiped out polio in the U.S., the disease still occurs in many other countries. Children and adults in the U.S. are immunized to prevent spread from the rest of the world.

**Diphtheria** which begins as a severe sore throat, may progress to suffocation or heart failure. Although rare today, it can be fatal to 1 in 10 who get it.

**Tetanus** can result from any break in the skin. Even small scratches or burns provide entry for the tetanus bacteria, but deep puncture wounds have an even higher risk of disease. Approximately 1 in every 10 reported cases are fatal.

**Pertussis** (Whooping Cough) is marked by repeated violent coughing spells. Over 70 percent of the deaths from pertussis are among children less than 1 year old.

**Hib Disease** (*Haemophilus influenzae b*) is a bacterial infection that begins like the common cold. It may lead to other complications including meningitis (inflammation of the lining of the brain), pneumonia, and infections of the blood, joints, throat, and covering of the heart.

**Hepatitis A** is caused by a virus and occurs throughout the world. It is spread primarily by person-to-person contact or ingestion of contaminated food or water. Children play an important role in hepatitis A transmission because they are generally not ill with symptoms and can serve as an unrecognized source of infection.

**Hepatitis B** is spread through contact with an infected person's blood, saliva, semen, or vaginal secretions. People who are infected with the hepatitis B virus, but who show no signs of illness, are chronically infected. A pregnant woman who has hepatitis B, or is chronically infected, can infect her baby at birth unless the baby is immunized. Cirrhosis (scarring of the liver) or cancers may develop later in life.

**Varicella** (chickenpox) is a highly contagious disease most children suffer in their first few years of life. Adolescents, adults, and persons with weakened immune systems may have more serious disease and are at higher risk for complications such as pneumonia, and encephalitis.

**Meningococcal Disease** is a rare but serious bacterial infection of the lining of the spinal cord and the brain, or the blood stream. It may result in brain damage, hearing loss, learning disability or death. First year college students are at a modestly increased risk for meningococcal disease, particularly those who live in dormitories.

**Pneumococcal Disease** is a leading cause of bacterial meningitis among children less than 1 year old in the United States. It is most serious in children under 2 years old and the elderly. The disease can also result in blood and middle ear infections and pneumonia.

**Human Papillomavirus (HPV)** is the most common sexually transmitted infection in the United States. People can be infected with HPV and have no symptoms.

HPV is spread by direct contact, usually sexual, with an infected person. HPV causes cervical cancer and several other types of cancers in women and men as well as genital warts.

**Rotavirus** is the most common cause of severe diarrhea in infants and young children in the United States. Transmission is through close person-to-person contact and by touching objects handled by an infected person. Rotavirus is responsible for up to 500,000 deaths from diarrhea worldwide.



## Immunize on Schedule

Babies are born with temporary maternal immunity against some diseases, but it wears off in a few months. Immunization is necessary to ensure continued protection.

Please consult your doctor, local public health department, or the Centers For Disease Control (CDC) at: [www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/index.html) for the most current immunization schedule.