

## What teens need to know

# Frequently asked questions about vaccination

Vaccinations are not just for little kids. Keeping your shots up to date is your best protection against many serious diseases. Check out the information below to learn more.

### I got vaccinated as a kid. Why do I need to do it again?

Protection from your childhood vaccinations may wear off. You are at higher risk for some diseases as you get older. It is important to keep your shots up to date.

### What is HPV? Do I need to worry about it?

Human papillomavirus (HPV) is a very common infection that can cause cervical cancer. It is usually spread through sexual activity. The HPV vaccine is recommended for females age 11-26 who have not yet been vaccinated, whether they are sexually active or not.

### How can I know if my shots are up to date?

Ask your doctor. If you need a copy of your record to attend school or participate in sports, your doctor can provide one.

### I am not sure if I have been vaccinated. Is it safe to get an extra dose?

For many vaccines it is OK to get an extra vaccine dose, especially if it means keeping your protection up to date. If you are not sure about what shots you have had, be sure to tell your doctor.

### Can a vaccine give me the disease?

Currently recommended vaccines do not cause disease. Vaccines contain very weak or inactivated germs. This causes your body to develop antibodies to fight the weak or inactivated germs. This also helps your body prepare to fight the real disease germs so you will not get sick. Ask your doctor about the specific vaccine(s) you are to receive if you are concerned about this issue.

### Why do people get sick even though they had a shot?

Vaccine shots usually work. Every once in awhile, a person gets sick anyway. Some reasons this can happen may be because their shot has not had enough time to work and they are around a person who has the disease. Or, it may be that their body did not respond to the vaccine and did not develop the antibodies necessary to fight the real disease germs.

## If I have a medical condition like asthma or diabetes, is it safe to get vaccinated?

Vaccination can be even more important for you if you have a certain medical condition. For example, having a chronic medical condition, like asthma or diabetes, increases your chances of getting very sick if you get the flu. Your doctor can tell you which vaccinations are right for you.

## If many serious childhood diseases have been wiped out and everyone else is vaccinated, why do I need to be vaccinated?

Some diseases may have disappeared, but the bacteria and viruses that cause them are still around. Many of them pass easily from person to person. For example, measles, mumps, whooping cough, and chickenpox are all spread by coughing or sneezing. Many of these infections can make you very sick and can even put you in the hospital.

## Which shots are recommended for teens?

### You may need vaccination against:

<input type="checkbox"/> Whooping cough, tetanus, and diphtheria	<input type="checkbox"/> Meningococcal (meningitis)
<input type="checkbox"/> Human papillomavirus (HPV)	

### You may also need the following vaccines:

<input type="checkbox"/> Chickenpox*	<input type="checkbox"/> Polio*
<input type="checkbox"/> Flu	<input type="checkbox"/> Measles, mumps, and rubella*
<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis A	<input type="checkbox"/> Pneumococcal polysaccharide (pneumonia)
<input type="checkbox"/> Hepatitis B*	

\*Recommended for teens who did not receive these shots as children.



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