

Immunization Hot Topics!

Multiple Vaccines Issue 1 of 5



Courtesy of cdc.gov

Studies show getting multiple vaccines at the same time is safe.

Data show that getting several vaccines at the same time does not cause any chronic health problems. A number of studies have been done to look at the effects of giving various combinations of vaccines. Before a new vaccine is licensed, it is tested with vaccines already recommended for children of that particular age. The recommended vaccines have been shown to be as effective when given with other vaccines as they are individually. **Based on this information, both the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices and the American Academy of Pediatrics recommend getting all routine childhood vaccines on time and simultaneously when multiple vaccines are indicated.**

Vaccination is important to prevent diseases early in life.

Vaccines are added to the schedule based on when an infant is most likely to be susceptible to the diseases. During the first few months of life, babies are somewhat protected from infectious diseases by maternal antibodies present in their bloodstream at birth. However, protection from maternal antibodies wanes during the first year of life and is somewhat variable. Because the duration of protection and robustness of maternal antibodies cannot be predicted, maturing the infant's own immune response before maternal antibodies wane is the most conservative approach.

Multiple vaccines do not overwhelm the immune system.

Infants and children are exposed to many germs every day just by playing, eating, and breathing. Their immune systems fight those antigens to keep the body healthy. The amount of antigens that children fight every day is more than the antigens in any combination of vaccines on the current schedule. Children's immune systems are not overwhelmed by receiving multiple vaccines at once.

An “alternate immunization schedule” is not a good idea.

Any length of time without immunizations is a time without protection. Babies are hospitalized and die more often from certain diseases, so it is important to vaccinate them as soon as it is recommended. The recommended schedule is designed to work best with a child's immune system at certain ages and at specific intervals. There is no research to show that a child would be equally protected against diseases with a different schedule. There is no scientific evidence to show that spreading out the shots would be safer.

Resources

- **Multiple Vaccines and the Immune System**
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/multiple-vaccines-immunity.html>
- **Vaccine Schedule: Altering the Schedule**
 - <http://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-schedule/altering-the-schedule>
- **Too Many Vaccines?**
 - <http://www.immunize.org/talking-about-vaccines/multiple-injections.asp>
- **The Childhood Immunization Schedule: Why Is It Like That?**
 - <https://www.aap.org/en-us/advocacy-and-policy/Documents/Vaccineschedule.pdf>
- **Physician Peer Education Program on Immunizations**
 - https://www.canr.msu.edu/physician_immunization_updates/
 - Schedule a free immunization update session at your facility!
- **Children’s Hospital of Philadelphia**
 - <http://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center>
- **Immunization Action Coalition**
 - www.immunize.org
- **American Academy of Pediatrics**
 - <https://www.aap.org/en-us/Pages/Default.aspx>
- **Alliance for Immunizations in Michigan**
 - <http://www.aimtoolkit.org>
- **Centers for Disease Control and Prevention-National Immunization Program**
 - <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/>
 - 1-800-CDC-INFO (1-800-232-4636)
 - TTY: 1-888-232-6348

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