



Public Health  
England

Wiltshire Council  
Where everybody matters



Healthy Schools  
WILTSHIRE



I protected  
my future

I had all my  
vaccinations

Ask at home today if you've  
had your vaccinations.



Developed by Pfizer Ltd  
in collaboration with PHE  
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# Everybody wants to grow up healthy and happy. Vaccinating against common illnesses is a quick and effective way to protect yourself against a range of serious and potentially fatal diseases<sup>1</sup>.

This leaflet provides important information you need to know about vaccination, and can also be used as a guide to talk to your GP, health visitor or nurse about your vaccinations.

## Why are vaccinations so important?

From the day you are born you will come into contact with thousands of germs (bacteria and viruses)<sup>1</sup>.

The majority of these germs will not cause you any harm, but some cause infections, such as meningitis, that can make you seriously ill and even lead to disability or death<sup>2,3</sup>.

Vaccinations can help you to fight off these bacteria and viruses, protecting yourself against many serious illnesses – and the complications that can arise from them<sup>1</sup>.

Simply put, vaccines save lives. This is why vaccines are offered in the UK for free by the National Health Service (NHS)<sup>4</sup>.

### Did you know?

Vaccines prevent more than 2.5 million deaths worldwide each year<sup>5</sup>.



### Did you know?

After clean water, vaccination is the most effective public health intervention in the world for saving lives and promoting good health<sup>6</sup>.



## What vaccinations you need and when<sup>4,8</sup>

Different vaccines are recommended for you at different ages. The table below shows what you need and when.

When	Vaccine
2 months old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib)</li> <li>Pneumococcal</li> <li>Rotavirus</li> </ul>
3 months old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and Hib (second dose)</li> <li>Meningococcal group C (Men C)</li> <li>Rotavirus (second dose)</li> </ul>
4 months old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough, polio and Hib (third dose)</li> <li>Pneumococcal (second dose)</li> </ul>
Between 12 and 13 months old – within a month of your first birthday	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Hib/Men C (booster)</li> <li>Pneumococcal (third dose)</li> <li>Measles, mumps and rubella (MMR)</li> </ul>
2 and 3 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nasal flu vaccine (annual)</li> </ul>
3 years and 4 months, or soon after	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Diphtheria, tetanus, whooping cough and polio (pre-school booster)</li> <li>MMR (second dose)</li> </ul>
Girls aged 12 to 13 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Human papillomavirus (HPV) 2 vaccines with a 6 to 24 month gap: in schools this will be one dose in year 8 and a second dose in year 9</li> </ul>
Around 14 years old	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tetanus, diphtheria and polio (booster)</li> <li>Men C (booster)</li> </ul>

# How do vaccines work?



Most vaccines are given in the form of an injection which contains tiny amounts of a bacteria or viruses<sup>7</sup>. Others may be given as a liquid or a spray<sup>8</sup>.



Some vaccines will require more than one dose to give the full protection<sup>4</sup>. Your GP, nurse or health visitor will be able to advise you on which vaccinations these are and when 'booster' doses are needed.



The bacteria and viruses in a vaccine are killed or weakened and will not overload your immune system<sup>7</sup>.



Instead, the vaccine will strengthen your immune system, protecting you from getting ill when you come into contact with the bacteria or viruses<sup>7</sup>.



It only takes a short time for a nurse or GP to give you a vaccination. In many cases the protection provided can last a lifetime, but this depends on the vaccine and the person<sup>7</sup>. Your GP, nurse or health visitor can provide more information.



# Myths and facts

There is a lot of information available about vaccinations. Here are some common myths and facts.

## Myth

As most children are vaccinated, I do not need to be vaccinated.

## Fact

Vaccination does not just protect you – it can help protect your whole community<sup>9</sup>. When a large number of the population is vaccinated this provides indirect protection to people who can't be vaccinated because they're too ill or are having treatment that damages their immune system, such as treatment for cancer<sup>7,9</sup>. However, to lower the chance of unvaccinated people contracting serious and highly infectious illnesses, and help prevent outbreaks of disease, it's estimated that at least 9 in 10 people need to have the recommended vaccines<sup>10</sup>.



## Myth

Vaccinations can make me ill.

## Fact

Although no vaccine is completely risk-free, the chances of major side effects from a vaccine are tiny compared with the potential impact to your health if you contracted the disease itself<sup>11</sup>.



## Myth

Some diseases are rare so I do not need to be vaccinated.

## Fact

Diseases that are rare in this country are still common in many others<sup>12</sup>. In a world where people travel frequently so do the germs! Vaccination not only protects you from imported infections but also protects the community where you live and so can help to prevent an epidemic in the future<sup>1</sup>.



## Myth

There's no point in getting vaccinated as protection will 'wear off' or 'run out'.

## Fact

Many vaccinations can provide long-term protection against infection, depending on the vaccination and the person being vaccinated<sup>7</sup>. However some vaccines also require a booster – your GP, nurse or health visitor will be able to help you understand which vaccines may need a boost and when<sup>4</sup>.



If you're unsure if you've had your vaccinations or you want more information, speak to your GP, nurse or health visitor.

[www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations](http://www.nhs.uk/Conditions/vaccinations)

Many of the recommended vaccinations in the immunisation programme protect against some form of meningitis<sup>13</sup>. These charities provide useful information and support:



[www.meningitis.org](http://www.meningitis.org)



[www.meningitisnow.org](http://www.meningitisnow.org)

## References

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