

Vaccination for adolescents and adults



Vaccines are used to boost the immune system and reduce the risk and severity of infections, including those that cause severe illness or death. Vaccine administration begins in childhood and continues through adulthood.

What are vaccines?

Vaccines are preparations that can be administered by injection, liquids, pills, or nasal sprays. These are safe and important for adults and children. Once we are vaccinated, the immune system develops an immunological memory that, when exposed to a germ, is activated and can fight against the virus.

Vaccines contain the killed, weakened, or structural version of the bacteria that causes a particular disease. When given to a healthy person, immunization produces an immune system response by creating the release of protection.

For weeks after birth, babies have some protection against the germs that cause them



illness. This protection is passed on by the person who carried the baby through the placenta before birth. After a short time, this protection wears off, and the relevant vaccinations recommended by the doctor should be given over the years.

Types of vaccines

1. **Live attenuated vaccines:** These use the weakened form of the germ that causes disease. These vaccines are used to protect against measles, mumps, rubella (MMR), rotavirus, smallpox, chickenpox, and yellow fever.
2. **Inactivated vaccines:** use a killed version of the germ with the aim of protecting against hepatitis A, influenza (injectable only), polio (injectable only) and rabies.
3. **Biosynthetic vaccines:** They may contain man-made substances that are very similar to portions of viruses or bacteria. These vaccines are used to protect against diseases such as Hib (Haemophilus influenzae type b), hepatitis B, HPV (Human Papillomavirus), pertussis (part of a combined DTaP vaccine), and shingles.
4. **Toxoid vaccines:** contain a toxin or chemical produced by the bacteria or virus. These vaccines make the person immune to the harmful effects of the infection rather than the infection itself. In addition, they are used to protect against diphtheria and tetanus.



Recommended vaccines for adolescents and adults:

- **Tdap vaccine:** at 11 or 12 years of age, the vaccine is administered. This is a booster that protects against three diseases: tetanus, diphtheria, and pertussis.
- **Human papillomavirus (HPV):** vaccinating minors against HPV when they are between 9 and 12 years old will allow them to develop strong immunity against the virus before they are exposed to it. If they don't get the first dose until age 15, they will need 3 doses.
- **MenACWY:** meningococcal vaccine. It protects against meningococcal bacteria of types A, C, W, and Y. At age 16, a booster dose is recommended.
- **MenB:** meningococcal vaccine. It protects against meningococcal bacteria type B. Teens and young adults (ages 16-23) can get the MenB vaccine in 2 doses.
- **Influenza:** A respiratory infection caused by a virus. It should be administered annually. The vaccine can be given starting at 6 months and then annually.
- **COVID-19 vaccine:** It is an infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. Ask your doctor if you need a booster of this vaccine, depending on the brand you used.



Social and Emotional Aspect

For tips, tools, and resources on how you and your family can cope with the emotional and physical concerns that arise during and after your medical treatment, please visit your primary care physician or call the following phone lines:

Medical Advice Line:

1-844-347-7801;

TTY/TDD 1-844-347 7804

APS Health:

787-641-9133

References:

<https://medlineplus.gov/spanish/ency/article/002024.htm>

<https://kidshealth.org/es/parents/immunization-chart.html>

<https://www.healthychildren.org/Spanish/safety-prevention/immunizations/Paginas/Immunizations-for-Teenagers-and-Young-Adults.aspx>

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