

Why You Should Immunize Your Children

Children need immunizations (shots) to protect them from dangerous diseases.

These diseases are spread by direct contact with others who already have the disease.

Measles is a serious disease that easily spreads from one person to another. Symptoms include a rash covering parts or all of the body, and fever. Complications from measles are dangerous and more common in children younger than 5 years old and in adults 20 years old or older. For every 1,000 children who get measles, one or two will die from it.

Mumps is caused by a virus, which is spread from person to person through the air. It causes swelling of the glands that make saliva, found in the cheeks. Mumps can lead to inflammation of the brain and tissue covering the brain and spinal cord (called encephalitis/meningitis), or deafness.

Rubella (also called German measles and 3-day measles) is a viral infection that has symptoms similar to a cold and low-grade fever, followed by a rash lasting about 3 days. It can cause birth defects in children born to mothers who become infected while they are pregnant.

Chickenpox also is caused by a virus. Initial symptoms include a slight fever and feeling tired or weak, followed by an itchy blister-like rash. The rash can leave permanent scars.

The best way to protect your child from these diseases is to vaccinate them. Children should receive the MMR & Chickenpox vaccines at 12-15 months (not earlier) and again at 4-6 years (before they are in kindergarten or first grade).

Protect your children. See your healthcare provider or visit the nearest Local Public Health Office of the Department of Health for more information.



measles



mumps



rubella



chickenpox