



Title: Immunizations: What can I do to help ease my child's stress?

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Abstract: There are several things that parents, physicians, and nursing staff can do to decrease the amount of pain and distress children experience during routine immunizations. Those discussed in this pamphlet include parental behavior, positioning, distraction techniques, injection site, and sucrose administration.

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Recommended Immunization Schedule for Persons Aged 0-6 Years—UNITED STATES • 2007

Vaccine	Age	Birth	1 month	2 months	4 months <small>see footnote 1</small>	6 months	12 months	15 months	18 months	10-23 months	2-3 years	4-6 years
Hepatitis B ¹		HepB	HepB				HepB			HepB Series		
Rotavirus ²				Rota	Rota	Rota						
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis ³				DTaP	DTaP	DTaP		DTaP				DTaP
Haemophilus influenzae type b ⁴				Hib	Hib	Hib ⁴	Hib	Hib	Hib	Hib		
Pneumococcal ⁵				PCV	PCV	PCV	PCV	PCV			PCV PPV	
Inactivated Poliovirus				IPV	IPV	IPV	IPV	IPV			IPV	
Influenza ⁶							Influenza (Yearly)					
Measles, Mumps, Rubella ⁷							M/M/R					M/M/R
Varicella ⁸							Varicella					Varicella
Hepatitis A ⁹								HepA (2 doses)			HepA Series	
Meningococcal ¹⁰											MP-SV4	

Range of recommended ages
 Catch-up immunization
 Certain high-risk groups

Protect your child!

Learn more about vaccinations:

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/child-schedule.htm>

American Academy of Pediatrics

<http://www.aap.org/healthtopics/immunizations.cfm>

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Primary Care Clerkship
Patient Education Tool

Immunizations

What can I do to help ease my child's stress?



Childhood immunizations

Due to the immeasurable benefits of childhood immunizations, they have become the most commonly occurring painful procedure in pediatric practices. As medical knowledge has grown and the commitment to preventing disease continues, the number of vaccines given to children has increased over the years. Now that children are getting multiple shots during their visits to their physician, parents would like to know...

How can I make this experience easier for my child?



Parental Behavior

Studies have shown that parents who show loving behavior while staying in control of their children positively influence a child's immunization experience.

Trying to reassure the child and apologizing have actually been shown to increase the distress a child will feel. It is best to use humor and teach your child coping strategies such as deep breathing and relaxation to reduce pain.

Positioning

If you feel comfortable holding your child during the shot, it is best to do it in a way that keeps the muscle it will be injected into relaxed and easily accessible. Try to restrain your child in a way that comforts them at the same time.

Distraction

Engaging your child in an activity to help take their mind off the shot will reduce the amount of pain they feel. You should pick something that fits your child's age and personality. Whether it is their favorite toy, a story, a movie, or a conversation with you, the most important thing is that your child focuses on something other than the shot being given. The more they are distracted, the less pain they will feel!

What can my doctor or nurse do to help?

Choosing the right site for the injection will help with the pain. In children under 18 months, the thigh is best. In children over 36 months, the arm is better. For those in between, it depends on the individual. Have your nurse or doctor help you decide. In babies less than 6 months old, sugar water has been shown to decrease pain as well.