

More information

WHO recommendations for routine immunization - summary tables: http://www.who.int/immunization/policy/immunization_tables/en/

WHO vaccine position papers: <http://www.who.int/immunization/documents/positionpapers/en/>

National routine immunization schedules: http://apps.who.int/immunization_monitoring/globalsummary/schedules

WHO EpiBrief, epidemiological analysis of select vaccine-preventable diseases in the WHO European Region, Jan to Dec. 2016: <http://www.euro.who.int/en/health-topics/communicable-diseases/poliomyelitis/publications/who-epi-brief-and-who-epidata/who-epidata/who-epidata,-no.-12017>

Reported incidence of vaccine-preventable diseases (through the WHO/UNICEF Joint Reporting Form): http://www.who.int/immunization/monitoring_surveillance/data/en/



Learn more about European Immunization Week and find activities in your country on the Immunize Europe Forum (www.immunize-Europe.org) and the WHO/Europe website (www.euro.who.int/eiw) For more information contact euvaccine@who.int

#VaccinesWork

#ImmunizeEurope

Childhood immunization

The safest start to life



Did you know?

Vaccination helps your child stay healthy, especially in the first five vulnerable years of life. But the benefits of vaccination do not stop there.

Protecting each other

Vaccination gives each child a protective shield against vaccine-preventable diseases. Vaccinated children do not catch and spread these diseases, so they help shield others who might be susceptible, such as:

- classmates who are allergic to vaccines
- younger siblings too young to be vaccinated or
- grandparents with weakened immune systems.

Studies have shown that the best way to protect older adults from pneumonia is by vaccinating young children against influenza and pneumococcal bacteria.

By reducing rates of pneumonia and meningitis, vaccines also help reduce the use of antibiotics, and the further spread of antibiotic resistance.

Stick to the schedule!

Vaccination schedules are designed to protect each person from diseases **when that protection is needed most**. The timing of vaccination can be critical. Some diseases such as **pertussis and rotavirus** are especially dangerous in the

first months of life. Others can be fatal at any age, including **measles, tetanus and diphtheria**. Vaccinating on time offers the best possible protection, but for diseases that remain a threat it is never too late to be protected.

Certain vaccines, if given on time, will help prevent the development of cancer later in life: hepatitis B vaccination at birth can help prevent liver cancer; and human papillomavirus (HPV) vaccination at 9-13 years of age is the first step in preventing cervical cancer.

Vaccines protect us from real threats

Thanks to vaccines, many once-common health threats are nearly forgotten in the WHO European Region. But these diseases can quickly return when vaccination coverage falls.

- Europe experienced cases of measles, rubella, diphtheria, pertussis and meningitis in 2016, tragically resulting in the death of at least 15 unprotected children.
- Tetanus bacteria are present worldwide, mostly in the soil and in animals. The disease is often fatal and can only be prevented through vaccination.
- Polio is endemic in only 3 remaining countries globally. Maintaining high vaccination coverage everywhere is needed to eradicate this terrible disease once and for all.

There is no better time than now to prevent, protect, immunize.

Vaccines are the safest choice

Like all medicines, vaccines too can have side effects, but these are nearly always mild and resolve within a few days. Allergic reactions or serious side effects are rare. The safety of each vaccine is evaluated continuously based on millions of administered doses around the world. Their benefits in preventing potentially serious and life-threatening diseases far outweigh the risks of side effects.

3 key facts:

- Vaccine-preventable diseases continue to cause **suffering and death** in the European Region.
- Routine vaccinations are carefully timed to offer **the best possible protection** when it is needed most.
- Vaccinating your child also **indirectly protects** those who cannot be vaccinated.

