

COMMON MYTHS ABOUT VACCINES – AND THE TRUTHS PARENTS NEED TO KNOW

Some parents worry about vaccines, and that's okay. Let's clear up some of the most common concerns:

Vaccines will overwhelm my baby's immune system.

Actually, even the tiniest babies are exposed to thousands of germs every day just by eating, breathing, and crawling. Vaccines are a tiny, safe challenge that the body is well-equipped to handle.

"Natural infection is better than vaccination"

While it's true that natural infection can sometimes lead to lifelong immunity, it also comes with big risks—like brain damage, deafness, or even death. Vaccines offer safe protection without putting your child in danger.

"Vaccines cause autism."

This is one of the most common myths—but it has been completely disproven. Large, high-quality studies from all over the world have found no link between vaccines and autism.

"Vaccines contain harmful toxins."

Vaccines contain ingredients in very small, safe amounts. These help keep the vaccine stable or make it work better. They are strictly tested and approved.

"My child is healthy—they don't need vaccines."

Even healthy children can catch serious infections and pass them on to others. Vaccines protect your child, your family, and your community.

"If everyone else is vaccinated, my child will be safe without it."

This is called herd immunity—but it only works when most people are vaccinated. If too many skip vaccines, diseases come back. Every vaccinated child helps protect the whole community.

"Too many vaccines at once will overload my child."

Vaccines are carefully scheduled based on how the immune system works. It's safe and effective to give multiple vaccines at once, and this protects your child sooner.

WHEN IN DOUBT, REACH OUT.

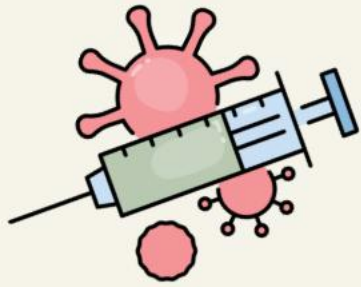
Your child's health and future are worth protecting. If you have questions or concerns about vaccines, we are here to listen, explain, and guide you.



THE IMPORTANCE OF VACCINES

Building your child's
immune system – one shot
at a time



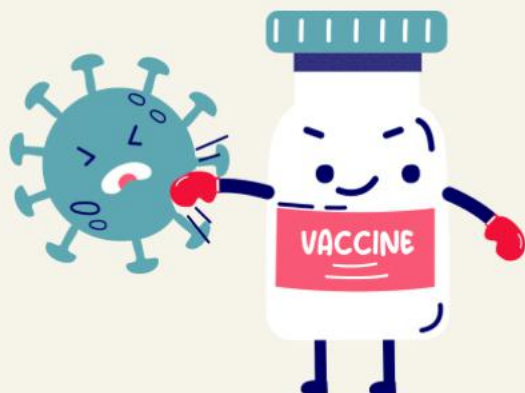


WHAT ARE VACCINES?

Vaccines are small, safe doses of weakened or inactive germs. They help the body learn to fight diseases without causing illness—so your child's immune system can recognize and fight off infections in the future.

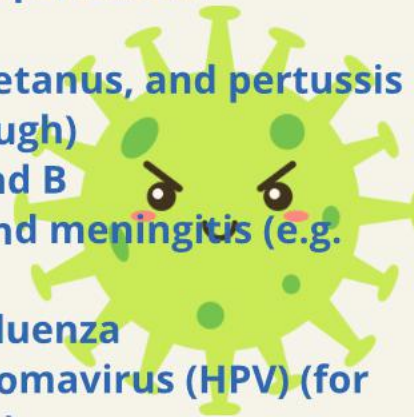
WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

- Protect your child from serious illnesses like measles, polio, and whooping cough
- Prevent the spread of disease to others
 - Build long-term immunity
- Help eliminate deadly diseases from communities
- Reduce the need for hospital visits and complications



WHAT ILLNESSES TO VACCINES PROTECT AGAINST?

- Measles, mumps, rubella
- Polio
- Diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis (whooping cough)
- Hepatitis A and B
- Pneumonia and meningitis (e.g. Hib, PCV)
- Rotavirus, influenza
- Human papillomavirus (HPV) (for older children)



ARE VACCINES SAFE?

Yes. Vaccines are among the most studied and tested health interventions in the world. All vaccines used in South Africa are approved by health authorities and monitored for safety.

WHEN SHOULD MY CHILD GET VACCINATED?

Age of child	EPI schedule	Private
At birth	OPV (0) BCG *See footnotes regarding hep B vaccine at birth	OPV (0) BCG *See footnotes regarding hep B vaccine at birth
6 weeks	OPV (1) Rotarix® (1) PCV10-Cipla® (1) Hexaxim® (1)	OPV (1) Rotarix® (1) or Rotateq® (1) Prevenar 13® or Synflorix® ³ Hexaxim® (1) or Infanrix Hexa® (1st dose at 8 weeks)
10 weeks	Hexaxim® (2)	Rotateq® (2) ² Hexaxim® (2) or Infanrix Hexa® (2nd dose at 12 weeks)
14 weeks	Rotarix® (2) PCV10-Cipla® (2) Hexaxim® (3)	Rotarix® (2) or Rotateq® (3) Prevenar 13® (2) or Synflorix® ³ (2) Hexaxim® (3) or Infanrix Hexa® (3rd dose at 16 weeks)
6 months	MR SII® ⁴ (1)	Measles vaccine Cipla® ⁴ Vaxigrip Tetra® or Inluvac Tetra® ⁵ Prevenar 13® if using 2+1 schedule.
9 months	PCV10-Cipla® (3)	(Do not give now if using Prevenar 13, (3) 3+1 schedule ¹) or Synflorix® ³ [at least 6 months from previous dose] Menactra® (1)
12 months	MR SII® (2) ⁴	Priorix® or Omzita® (1) at 12 months Avaxim 80® or Havrix Jnr® (1) at 12 months Varilrix® ⁶ or Onvara® ⁷ (1) Menactra® (2) (At least 3 months after the first dose of Menactra®)
18 months	Hexaxim® (4)	Hexaxim® (4) or Infanrix Hexa® (4) Avaxim 80® or Havrix Jnr® (2) (At least 6 months after the first dose of Hep A)
6 years	Adacel® (6 years)	Tetraxim® ⁸ or Boostrix tetra® or Adacel Quadra® Priorix® or Omzita® (2) Varilrix® (2) ^{6,7}
9 years	Cervarix® ⁹	Cervarix® or Gardasil® or Gardasil 9® ¹⁰ (from 9 years) (Second dose 6 months later)
12 years	Adacel®	Adacel Quadra®, Adacel®, Boostrix® or Boostrix Tetra® ¹¹

