

What is Immunization?

Immunization is the process where an individual becomes protected against a disease by the introduction of a vaccine into their body.

National Immunization Awareness Week materials are available:

Immunize.ca

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The Importance of Immunizations

Immunizations protect against disease by introducing vaccines into the body. Immunizations are especially important for young children. Keep your child(ren) and yourself safe - by getting vaccines at the recommended time, you and your child(ren) can be protected from many diseases over your lifetime. Immunization has saved more lives in the past 50 years than any other health measure.

Vaccines cause the immune system to produce antibodies and form memory cells which prevent re-infection. Vaccination is a lifelong process; breastfeeding is your child's first form of immunization. For immunization to be the most effective, children should have all immunizations done at the recommended time, starting at two months of age.

Vaccines recommended for children include:

DTap-IPV - Diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), inactivated polio virus

DTap-IPV-Hib - as above, and also includes haemophilus influenza type B

Tdap - Tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis

MMR or MMRV - Measles, mumps and rubella or with varicella

RV - Rotavirus

HB - Hepatitis B

Var - Varicella (chicken pox)

Pneu-C-13 - Pneumococcal

Men-C or Men-C-ACYW-135 - Meningococcal

Saskatchewan offers free routine childhood and adult immunization, plus free immunization programs for people identified to be at high risk. Immunization programs for children are delivered by Public Health Nurses; programs for school-aged children are offered in school settings via Public Health.

Are Vaccines Safe?

Vaccines used in Canada are very safe, they are developed with the highest standards and continuously monitored and tested before being approved for use. Mild side effects such as redness at the injection site or fever may occur and last a short amount of time. Serious adverse reactions to vaccines are very rare.

National Immunization Awareness Week is April 23-30, 2016. The theme for National Immunization Awareness Week (NIAW) is **"Go for the Gold"**, encouraging all to be a champion for vaccination.

