

Vaccine Preventable Diseases in Canada: What Are They?

VACCINES CAN PREVENT FIRST NATIONS, INUIT AND MÉTIS PEOPLE FROM GETTING SICK, HAVING LIFE-LONG COMPLICATIONS OR DYING FROM SOME DISEASES.

Diseases that can be prevented by vaccines are called vaccine-preventable diseases. Getting vaccinated (also called immunized) also helps protect other people who may not be able to get some vaccines, such as babies who are too young to be vaccinated or people with certain health conditions. Vaccines increase people's immunity to the diseases, making it harder for the diseases to spread in the community.



Check out this video:
<http://bit.ly/vaccine-purpose>

See the following chart for vaccinations schedules:
<https://www.canada.ca/content/dam/phac-aspc/documents/services/provincial-territorial-immunization-information/childhood-vaccination-schedule-2020.pdf>



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Listed below are some vaccine-preventable diseases and when vaccinations are routinely offered for protection:

Diphtheria - A contagious bacterial illness affecting the respiratory system. Diphtheria bacteria live in the mouth, throat and nose of an infected person and can be spread to others by coughing and sneezing. Symptoms include fever, chills, sore throat and difficulty breathing due to increased mucous production and swelling of the throat. Diphtheria can also cause temporary muscle paralysis, leading to suffocation and death.

Vaccinations provided in infancy, with boosters through to adulthood.

Tetanus (lockjaw) - An illness caused by bacteria that lives in soil, dirt, human and animal feces. Tetanus often comes from cuts or injuries from sharp metal objects. When the bacteria get into the human body through cuts and injuries to the skin, it produces a toxin which attacks the nervous system. This causes fever, headaches, seizures, high blood pressure, increased heart rate, and stiff painful muscles, which can affect breathing. Even with aggressive, intensive treatment, 10% of people with tetanus will not survive. It does not spread from person to person (not contagious), but anyone is at risk and the vaccine is the only protection against tetanus.

Vaccinations provided in infancy, with boosters through to adulthood.



Pertussis (Whooping cough) - A contagious bacterial illness affecting the respiratory system. It is most dangerous for infants under the age of one, with infants under two months having the highest death rate. Symptoms include fever, runny nose, and severe coughing, often resulting in vomiting, choking and difficulty breathing. Complications from pertussis include pneumonia, seizures and brain damage.

Vaccinations provided in infancy, with boosters through to teen years.

Polio - A contagious viral illness causing fever, nausea, muscle pain, and fatigue. In one in a hundred patients, polio can also infect the central nervous system, causing muscle paralysis and permanent nerve damage.

Vaccinations provided at infancy with boosters through childhood.

Haemophilus Influenza Type B (Hib) - A bacterial illness, unrelated to the influenza virus. It can cause meningitis (swelling of the brain and spinal cord), bone and joint infections, swelling of the throat, pneumonia, and infection in the blood.

Vaccinations provided throughout infancy.

Pneumococcal Disease - A contagious bacterial illness affecting the lungs, brain, blood, ears, and sinuses. These infections are difficult to treat and can lead to brain damage and death. Children younger than 5 years and adults 65 years or older are the most at risk: however, anyone with underlying health problems, such as diabetes or asthma, is susceptible to pneumococcal disease.

Vaccinations provided throughout infancy.

Rotavirus - A highly contagious viral illness, and the most common cause of gastroenteritis (upset stomach and diarrhea) in young children.

Vaccinations provided throughout infancy.

Mumps - A contagious viral illness which causes painful swelling in the neck and cheeks. Other symptoms include fever, headache, ear ache, trouble talking, chewing and swallowing, and fatigue. Complications include deafness and meningitis (swelling of the brain and spinal cord). Mumps may cause sterility.

Vaccinations provided in infancy with booster in childhood.

Rubella - A contagious viral illness characterized by a rash that starts on the face and progresses down the body, fever, nausea and inflammation of the lining of the eye. If rubella is contracted during pregnancy, the infection can spread to the fetus, resulting in potential miscarriage, stillbirth or severe birth defects such as heart damage, cataracts and deafness.

Vaccinations provided in infancy with a booster in childhood.

Measles - A highly contagious viral illness characterized by small white spots in the mouth and throat, and a red, blotchy rash which starts on the face and progresses down the body. Other symptoms include fever, cough, and runny nose. Complications include ear infections, blindness, pneumonia, encephalitis (inflammation of the brain), or death. In pregnant women, measles can cause preterm labour, miscarriage and babies with low birth weight.

Vaccinations provided in infancy with booster in childhood.

Varicella (Chickenpox) - A common, highly contagious viral illness, most frequently occurring in children.

Symptoms include fever, runny nose, fatigue, and fluid-filled blisters (called pustules). Illness is usually mild, but in some cases can have severe complications such as flesh eating disease. Patients with other medical conditions such as cancer, diabetes, and asthma are at greater risk of getting chickenpox related complications. People with a decreased immune system cannot get the chickenpox vaccine and must rely on community immunity to chickenpox as their protection.

Vaccinations provided in infancy with booster in childhood.

Meningococcal Disease (Meningitis) - A contagious bacterial meningitis (inflammation of the membranes surrounding the brain) that causes fever, drowsiness, headache, vomiting, and in severe cases, sepsis, coma and death.

Vaccination in infancy and junior high or high school.

Hepatitis B - A viral illness that affects the liver. Hepatitis B is transmitted through blood and other body fluids. Symptoms include fatigue, weight loss, abdominal pain and jaundice, and can result in liver cirrhosis or cancer.

Vaccination in pre-teen or early teen years.

Human Papillomavirus (HPV) - A viral illness and among the most common sexually transmitted infections in Canada. The HPV vaccine prevents specific strains of HPV, including the strains that cause 70% of anal and genital cancers, and 90% of anal and genital warts.

Vaccination in pre-teen or early teen years.

The occurrence of most diseases that can be prevented by vaccines is low in Canada due to successful vaccines and immunization programs. The success of immunization programs relies on having as many people immune to these diseases as possible. If more people choose not to get vaccines, vaccine preventable diseases in Canada will rise and spread among susceptible individuals.

Our thanks to students J. Carroll, J. Daigle, S. MacBean, S. McKee, A. Mercey, O. Obajimi, & S. Woodstock and our reviewers.



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