

FACILITATING VACCINATION in your practice

Unsubstantiated or inaccurate information about the importance of vaccinations can keep parents on the fence as to whether they have their child(ren) vaccinated on schedule as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Parents who question vaccine safety and efficacy often seek advice from their healthcare providers, and many ultimately decide to vaccinate. For vaccine-hesitant parents, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that providers first understand and acknowledge parental concerns in a nonconfrontational manner, and then clarify and reaffirm parents' correct beliefs and address misconceptions about immunization.

These Frequently Asked Questions cards are designed to be used during your conversations with parents to help facilitate a dialogue about the importance of vaccination. They include some of the more common concerns that you may hear from parents about their child's CDC-recommended vaccinations and provide proposed responses that can help address them. You can use this conversation tool as part of a broader strategy towards vaccine advocacy in your practice, including the following tips:

- **Make strong, confident recommendations**
 - Remember, your judgment is a very influential factor for the majority of families
- **Utilize a presumptive approach (“We will be giving the following vaccines today”) rather than a participatory approach (“Do you want your child to get his vaccines today?”)**
 - Parents are less likely to resist vaccination when it is presented as the presumed course of action
- **Get everyone in the office on board**
 - Physicians, nurses, and office personnel should all reinforce the vaccination message
- **Be empathetic, but project calm resolve**
 - Your wisdom holds weight—empathy can lead to parental acceptance and commitment
- **Target your responses to the person in front of you**
 - Keep in mind the parents' educational level, cultural and religious background, and other factors that may influence their decision-making
- **Make it personal**
 - Tell parents why your own children are vaccinated and why you yourself are vaccinated
- **Avoid the tendency to be dismissive**
 - Acknowledge parents' concerns—and steer the conversation back to the importance and efficacy of CDC-recommended vaccinations
- **If parents bring up concerns or push back—focus on the facts**
 - Pepper the conversation with key facts

Frequently Asked Questions Cards Overview

In your well-baby visits with parents and their children, you may be asked questions such as those that follow. Responses suggested on the cards can help facilitate a dialogue with parents who are apprehensive or resistant to vaccination.

Is it safe to get so many vaccines at once?

Are shots harmful for my baby?

Is it more painful to receive multiple shots at once?

Is it better to use an “alternative” schedule?

Is natural immunity the same as vaccine-induced immunity?

Do vaccines cause autism?

Are shots very painful for my baby?

Do some religious organizations oppose vaccination?

Is it safe for my child to receive a vaccination when sick?

How are vaccines tested for safety?

What are the most common side effects of vaccines?

Will the vaccine give someone the disease it’s supposed to prevent?



Vaccine FAQs

Frequently Asked Questions



Is it okay for my baby to
get so many vaccines
at once?



Vaccines—even multiple vaccines given on the same day—**do not overload the immune system.**

- According to the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention), giving several vaccines at the same time means fewer office visits. This may save parents time and money, and can be less traumatic for the child
- Your baby's immune system is strong. It encounters more antigens every day in the world than it does from vaccines



Are shots harmful
for my baby?



According to the CDC, vaccine-preventable **diseases are dangerous** and the **vaccines that prevent them are safe.**

- Without vaccines, many **diseases will return**, as has been seen in recent outbreaks. It's important to vaccinate your child to help prevent these diseases from posing serious problems for their health
- Unvaccinated worldwide travelers can contract diseases and spread them to unvaccinated children



Are shots very
painful for my baby?



Shots can be painful. There are some things you can do to decrease the pain.

- Studies have demonstrated simple measures that can be taken to reduce the pain of injections, including breastfeeding before, during, and after, providing sugar water, and distracting the child during the vaccination by making funny faces or telling a story



Is it better to use an
"alternative" schedule?



The schedule recommended by the ACIP (Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices) is **based on a thorough review of the scientific evidence**. ACIP is a group of medical and public health experts at the CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention).

- According to the CDC, spreading out vaccines according to an alternative schedule can result in children who are more vulnerable to disease



Is natural immunity
the same as vaccine-
induced immunity?



Natural immunity that comes from fighting an infection often provides strong and long-lasting protection; however, you should know as parents that there are potentially serious consequences of your child getting the disease.

- The CDC estimates that vaccination of children born between 1994 and 2013 will prevent 322 million illnesses and 732,000 deaths over the course of their lifetimes



Do vaccines
cause autism?



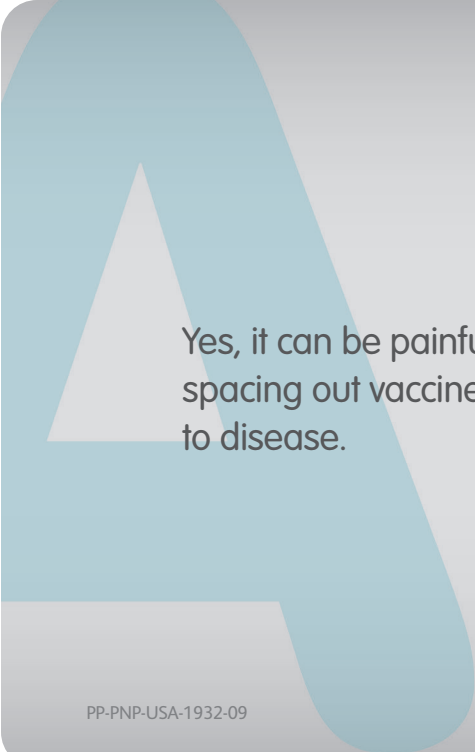
According to the CDC, vaccines do not cause autism.

- According to the CDC, some people have concerns that autism spectrum disorder might be linked to the vaccines children receive, but the CDC has concluded, based on a thorough review of scientific evidence, that there is no link between receiving vaccines and developing autism spectrum disorder
- In a **large-scale study of 657,461 Danish children** published in 2019, there was no link between autism and MMR vaccination*



Is it more painful to
receive multiple shots
at once?



A large, stylized teal letter 'A' is positioned on the left side of the slide, partially overlapping the text area.

Yes, it can be painful to receive multiple shots at once, but spacing out vaccines can leave children more vulnerable to disease.



Do some religious
organizations oppose
vaccination?



Many religious organizations generally support vaccination.

- The leaders of many religious organizations have spoken in favor of vaccination



Is it safe for my child to
receive a vaccination
when sick?



According to the CDC, children can still get vaccines—even with a fever or mild illness.

- Because a mild illness does not affect how well the body responds to a vaccine, your child can still be vaccinated if they have:
 - A low-grade fever (less than 101 degrees Fahrenheit)
 - A cold, runny nose, or cough
 - An ear infection (otitis media)
 - Mild diarrhea
- The CDC and doctors at leading health organizations, like the American Academy of Pediatrics and the American Academy of Family Physicians, recommend that children with mild illnesses receive vaccinations on schedule
- It's important that children get their vaccines on time to help protect them against serious diseases. Your child's doctor can help determine the vaccines your child can safely get at each visit



How are vaccines
tested for safety?



Vaccines are studied in **thousands of people** before they are approved for use.

- Side effects may occur. Once the vaccine is approved, it is continuously monitored by the CDC and public health authorities
- You can find more information about this in the CDC's "Parent's Guide to Childhood Immunizations"



What are the most
common side effects
of vaccines?



Any vaccine can cause side effects. For the most part, these are **minor** (for example, a sore arm or low-grade fever) and **go away within a few days**.

- Remember, vaccines are continually monitored for safety, and like any medication, vaccines can cause side effects



Will the vaccine give
someone the disease it's
supposed to prevent?



It's impossible to get the disease from any vaccine
made with dead (killed) bacteria or viruses or just part of
the bacteria or virus.

Pfizer is an independent company providing pharmacy services on behalf of Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield Medicaid.

Anthem Blue Cross and Blue Shield Medicaid is the trade name of Anthem Kentucky Managed Care Plan, Inc., independent licensee of the Blue Cross and Blue Shield Association. Anthem is a registered trademark of Anthem Insurance Companies, Inc.

PP-PNP-USA-1932-14

AKYPEC-3227-22 May 2022

