

Road to **WELL**fluent™

Embrace better health.

IMPORTANT REASONS TO VACCINATE YOUR CHILD

You want to do what is best for your children. You know about the importance of car seats, baby gates and other ways to keep them safe. But, did you know that one of the best ways to protect your children is to make sure they have all of their vaccinations?

Immunizations can save your child's life. Because of advances in medical science, your child can be protected against more diseases than ever before. Some diseases that once injured or killed thousands of children are no longer common in the U.S. – primarily due to safe and effective vaccines. Polio is one example of the great impact that vaccines have had in the United States. Polio was once America's most feared disease, causing death and paralysis across the country, but thanks to vaccination the United States has been polio-free since 1979. Due to continual worldwide vaccination efforts, only small pockets of polio still exist.

Vaccination is very safe and effective. Vaccines are only given to children after careful review by scientists, doctors, and healthcare professionals. Vaccine side effects are almost always mild such as redness or swelling at the site of the shot, but this is minimal compared to the pain, discomfort, and risk of injury and death from the diseases these vaccines prevent. Serious side effects following vaccination, such as severe allergic reaction, are very rare. The disease-prevention benefits of getting vaccinated are much greater than the possible side effects for almost all children.

Immunization protects others you care about. Children in the U.S. still get vaccine-preventable diseases. In fact, we have seen resurgences of measles and whooping



cough (pertussis) over the past few years. For example, in 2014, there were 667 cases of measles in 27 states, the greatest number of cases since measles was eliminated in 2000. The following year saw measles cases as well. During 2015, 147 people were part of a large, multi-state measles outbreak linked to an amusement park in

continued on next page

continued from previous page

California. Almost one in 10 people who became sick with measles in this outbreak were babies too young to be vaccinated. While some babies are too young to be protected by vaccination, others may not be able to receive certain vaccinations due to severe allergies, weakened immune systems from conditions like leukemia, or other reasons. To help keep them safe, it is important that you and your children who are able to get vaccinated are fully immunized. This not only protects your family, but also helps prevent the spread of these diseases to your friends and loved ones.

Immunizations can save your family time and money.

A child with a vaccine-preventable disease can be denied attendance at schools or daycare facilities. Some vaccine-preventable diseases can result in prolonged disabilities and can take a financial toll because of lost time at work, medical bills or long-term disability care. In contrast, getting vaccinated against these diseases is a good investment and usually covered by insurance. The Vaccines for Children program is a federally funded program that provides vaccines at no cost to children from low-income families. To find out more, ask your child's healthcare professional or visit the CDC VFC site.

Immunization protects future generations. Vaccines have reduced and, in some cases, eliminated many diseases that killed or severely disabled people just a few generations ago. For example, smallpox vaccination eradicated that disease worldwide. Your children don't

have to get smallpox shots anymore because the disease no longer exists anywhere in the world. By vaccinating children against rubella (German measles), we have dramatically reduced the risk that pregnant women will pass this virus on to their fetus or newborn, and birth defects associated with that virus are seen in only rare cases in the United States when a pregnant woman who was never vaccinated against rubella is exposed to someone who contracted rubella in another country. If we continue vaccinating now, and vaccinating completely, parents in the future may be able to trust that some diseases of today will no longer be around to harm their children in the future.

National Infant Immunization Week is April 26th thru May 3rd. This annual observance to raise awareness about the benefits of immunizations and to improve the health of children two years old or younger. Vaccines have drastically reduced infant death and disability caused by preventable diseases in the United States. In addition, immunizations can now protect infants and children from 14 vaccine-preventable diseases before age two. Talk to your child's doctor today about what immunizations are recommended, and get him or her protected right away.

For more information about the importance of infant immunization, visit CDC's vaccine website for parents:

<https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/programs/vfc/index.html>

April is Humor Month

National Humor Month was conceived as a means to heighten public awareness of the therapeutic value of humor. Laughter and joy – the benchmarks of humor – lead to improved well-being, boosted morale, increased communication skills, and an enriched quality of life.

It's no coincidence that the month begins with April Fool's Day, a day which has sanctioned frivolity and amusement for hundreds of years.

Humor as a tool to lift ailing spirits is an established notion supported by scientific research. The curative power of laughter and its ability to relieve debilitating stress and burnout may indeed be one of the great medical discoveries of our times. This site is loaded with resources and projects related to humor. Laugh it up! <http://www.humormonth.com/>



STOP THE SPREAD OF GERMS

Help prevent the spread of respiratory diseases like COVID-19.

Avoid close contact with people who are sick.



Cover your cough or sneeze with a tissue, then throw the tissue in the trash.



Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth.



Clean and disinfect frequently touched objects and surfaces.



Stay home when you are sick, except to get medical care.



Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds.



For more information on COVID-19, please visit: <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-nCoV/index.html>

