

# Immunization Awareness Month

## August is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM).

The goal of NIAM is to promote awareness about immunizations across the lifespan. August is the perfect time to remind family, friends and coworkers to get caught up on their vaccines before heading back to school and to plan ahead to receive the flu shot.



Immunizations (also called vaccinations, shots or vaccines) offer protection from many infectious diseases, including polio, measles, and mumps. The viruses and bacteria that cause these diseases still exist. Staying up-to-date on the recommended vaccines can protect yourself, your family and your community from life-threatening infections.

### Prevent and Protect

Prevention is key! Immunizations provide immunity and can prevent a disease from occurring in the first place, rather than attempting to cure it after the fact. They help to protect our future generations and are one of the best ways to eliminate diseases. Vaccines don't just protect you – they protect the people around you. Some people in your family and community may not be able to receive certain vaccines because of their age and/or health condition.

### Shots for Children

It is important for all children to get shots. Most vaccines are given during the first five to six years of life, as infants and children are particularly vulnerable to infection. Getting all shots recommended by age 2 protects children from serious diseases, including:

- Measles, mumps and rubella
- Whooping cough (pertussis)

- Chickenpox
- Hepatitis A and B

Some vaccines require more than one round of shots. Children need all shots in order to be fully protected. Be sure to ask your doctor for a list of all the vaccinations your child has received, and keep it up-to-date. Your child will need a current immunization record for school and other activities.

### Shots for Pre-Teens

As kids grow older, some vaccines begin to "wear off", which is why booster shots are sometimes necessary. Pre-teens are also at greater risk for more diseases as they get older, like meningitis and HPV. It is recommended that pre-teens ages 11 and 12 get the following important vaccines:

- Tdap booster
- MCV4 shot (protects against types of meningococcal disease, which includes meningitis)
- HPV vaccine (3 shot series)
- A flu shot every year

### Shots for Adults

Many of us think that vaccines are just for children, but experts now recommend adult vaccinations. It is estimated that each year 50,000 adults die each from vaccine-preventable disease such as influenza

and shingles. As you grow older, you may also be at risk for other less serious diseases. Protect yourself, your family, your coworkers and your community. Make sure you are up-to-date on the following vaccines:

- Flu shot every year
- Tdap vaccine (protects against tetanus, diphtheria, pertussis)
- Tdap booster every 10 years
- Shot to prevent shingles after age 60
- Shot to prevent pneumonia (also called PPSV) after age 65

### Do You Need Additional Shots?

Depending on your prior medical history, occupation and certain lifestyle choices, you may need additional vaccines. Other vaccines are also recommended for those individuals traveling outside the United States. Ask your healthcare provider about any additional shots you may need.

### For More Information

Talk with your doctor to make sure everyone in your household gets the shots they need. The following websites also offer helpful information on vaccines:

- <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines>
- <http://www.adultvaccination.com>



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