

VACCINE FACTS
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I have recently been asked about why vaccines are needed. In this article I hope to answer this question.

Why do people need a Hepatitis B Vaccine (HBV)?

It is estimated that 78,000 persons in the U.S. are infected with HBV each year and that 6,000 people die from HBV liver complications.

Why do people need a Diphtheria/Pertussis/Tetanus (DPT) Vaccine?

Diphtheria complications include heart and nerve inflammation, and heart failure.

Pertussis, commonly called whooping cough, complications include pneumonia, seizures, inflammation of the brain and permanent brain damage. Pertussis is highly contagious, 70-100% of susceptible household contacts and 50-80% of susceptible school contacts will become infected following exposure to someone who is contagious.

Tetanus, commonly called lock-jaw, causes spasms of the muscles involved with chewing and of the back. Tetanus occurs when tetanus bacillus grows at the site of an injury.

Why do people need a Haemophilus Influenzae Type B (Hib) Vaccine?

Complications include meningitis, hearing and vision loss, mental retardation, seizures, motor and speech delays, inflammation of the skin, bone or of the sac that encloses the heart, pneumonia, sepsis, blood poisoning, and epiglottitis, which can lead to death from airway obstruction.

Why do people need a Pneumococcal Vaccine?

Complications include pneumonia, ear and sinus infections, blood poisoning, meningitis and death.

Why do people need a Poliovirus Vaccine?

Complications include meningitis, paralysis and death. Death rates for children are 2-5%, while adult death rates are 15-30%. An infected person will transmit the virus 73-96% of the time to susceptible household contacts. Transmission is primarily by the fecal-oral route, although oral-oral transmission can occur.

Why do people need a Influenza (flu) Vaccine?

Complications include pneumonia, worsening of chronic respiratory and cardiac diseases, sinus and ear infections, inflammation and swelling of the brain and death. Persons in semi-enclosed or crowded environments, such as students or persons in a skilled nursing facility are at high risk of exposure.

Why do people need a Varicella (Chickenpox) Vaccine?

Complications include skin infections, inflammation of the brain, kidney and liver, arthritis, defective muscle coordination, decreased blood platelets, hemorrhage and death.

Why do people need a Measles/Mumps/Rubella (MMR) Vaccine?

Measles complications include inflammation of the brain and death. Measles is highly contagious and 90% or more of unvaccinated household contacts will be infected.

Mumps complications include inflammation of the pancreas, testis, defective muscle coordination and death.

Rubella, commonly called german measles, can produce devastating fetal infection when susceptible pregnant women are infected.

Why do people need a Hepatitis A Vaccine?

Complications include death from liver complications. Transmission occurs primarily by the fecal-oral route, from direct contact, or ingestion of fecally contaminated food or water.

Why do people need a Meningococcal-Disease Vaccine?

Complications include limb loss, hearing loss and death. College students living on campus are at least 3 times more likely to develop meningococcal infections than persons not living on campus.

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