

Your Immunization Checklist: From childhood to adulthood

By Jeanne Sager

VACCINES YOUR CHILD NEEDS TO START PRE-SCHOOL

Although requirements vary by region, and generally only apply to publicly funded pre-schools, there is a standard set of vaccines the American Academy of Pediatrics suggests children receive before the age of 3, which is when the majority of American children begin a pre-school program:

Hepatitis B –

What it's for: Administered in three separate doses, the immunization fights Hepatitis B, a contagious disease that affects the liver. It helps to prevent liver cancer down the line.

When it's given: Before a newborn leaves the hospital, with a follow-up in the first or second month of life and a final shot between 6 & 18 months.

DTaP –

What it's for: Kids will have received four of five shots meant to fight diphtheria, tetanus and pertussis, three bacterial illnesses, by 3 years old.

When it's given: 2, 4 and 6 months, with another between a year and 15 months.

Hib –

What it's for: The vaccination wards off Haemophilus influenza type b, an air-borne bacteria which can cause bacterial meningitis and blood, bone, or joint infections. Scientists have also linked the vaccine to a reduction in ear infections and respiratory illnesses.

When it's given: 2, 4 and 6 months with a booster some time between a year and 15 months.

PCV –

What it's for: Also referred to as the pneumococcal conjugate, it prevents pneumonia, meningitis and bacteraemia. The CDC considers pneumococcus one of the most deadly of all vaccine-preventable illnesses.

When it's given: 3 months, 5 months, 7 months and a fourth by 16 months.

IPV –

What it's for: A vaccine made from a dead virus, the inactivated polio is given to children to retain the United States' current rates of 0 polio cases.

When it's given: The first dose is given between 1 and 2 months, the second at 4 months and the final shot between 6 and 18 months.

MMR –

What it's for: Given as a preventative measure against measles, mumps and rubella

When it's given: The first shot is given between a year and 15 months (with another to follow after pre-school begins).

Varicella –

What it's for: The two-part vaccine prevents the disease more commonly known as the chicken pox.

When it's given: The first shot is given when a child is between a year and 15 months (with another to follow after pre-school begins).

Hepatitis A –

What it's for: Long-term prevention of an infectious disease that attacks the liver. It's most often transmitted when an infected person's feces ends up in the mouth, making children particularly vulnerable as they frequently put their hands in their mouths.

When it's given: One dose is administered when a child turns a year, followed by a second around their second birthday.

Rotavirus –

What it's for: The vaccine has been proven 74 percent effective against the leading cause of acute gastroenteritis in babies, a disease that is accompanied by vomiting and diarrhea and responsible for severe dehydration and often hospitalization.

When it's given: Depending on the brand of vaccine, babies receive two or three doses with the first at 2 months, the second at 4 months and a third at 6 months.

Influenza –

What it's for: Slightly different each year, the vaccine prevents the strain of seasonal flu expected to make its rounds of the country.

When it's given: The CDC and American Academy of Pediatrics both call for annual influenza vaccines in the late summer or early fall for children 6 months to age 18.