

CHILDHOOD VACCINES

MYTH VS FACT



PUBLIC HEALTH

CITY OF ABILENE TEXAS

MYTH VS FACT

HERE ARE SOME COMMON
MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT CHILDHOOD
VACCINATIONS

MYTH:

CHILDHOOD VACCINES CONTAIN UNSAFE CHEMICALS.

FACT:

CHILDHOOD VACCINES, AS WELL AS ADULT VACCINES, DO CONTAIN TRACE AMOUNTS OF FORMALDEHYDE. HOWEVER, FORMALDEHYDE IS A NATURALLY OCCURRING CHEMICAL THAT OUR BODIES PRODUCE EVERY DAY. THE AMOUNTS OF FORMALDEHYDE IN VACCINES ARE A SMALL AND INSIGNIFICANT AMOUNT THAT IS COMPLETELY SAFE.

MYTH:

VACCINES ARE NOT EFFECTIVE AT PREVENTING DISEASE.

FACT:

VACCINES ARE PROVEN TO BE EFFECTIVE AT PREVENTING COMMON CHILDHOOD ILLNESSES SUCH AS MEASLES, MUMPS, RUBELLA, VARICELLA, PERTUSSIS, ROTAVIRUS, AND SEVERAL OTHERS. IN CHILDREN THAT DO NOT RECEIVE THESE VACCINES, THEY ARE AT INCREASED RISK FOR CONTRACTING THE ILLNESS WITH SEVERE SYMPTOMS, AS WELL AS SPREADING THE DISEASE TO OTHER CHILDREN.

MYTH:

IF OTHER CHILDREN ARE VACCINATED, THEN I DO NOT NEED TO VACCINATE MY CHILDREN.

FACT:

IF A CHILD WHO IS NOT VACCINATED CONTRACTS A DISEASE, IT CAN MUTATE INTO A DIFFERENT (POTENTIALLY MORE HARMFUL) STRAND. THE NEW STRAND CAN THEN INFECT CHILDREN WHO ALREADY HAVE THE VACCINE. *THE BEST WAY TO PREVENT THIS IS TO STAY UP TO DATE ON ALL CHILDHOOD VACCINES TO KEEP EVERYONE SAFE FROM ILLNESS.*

MYTH:

IT IS SAFER TO WAIT UNTIL CHILDREN ARE OLDER TO VACCINATE.

FACT:

IN COMMUNICABLE DISEASES, **THE RISK FOR SEVERE SYMPTOMS IS INCREASED IN YOUNGER CHILDREN AND INFANTS.** THEREFORE, *IT IS IMPORTANT TO FOLLOW THE VACCINE SCHEDULE TO PREVENT YOUR CHILD FROM CONTRACTING THE DISEASE AND HAVING SEVERE SYMPTOMS.*

MYTH:

MY BABY CAN NOT HANDLE ALL THE VACCINES AT ONE TIME, IT SEEMS LIKE TOO MUCH.

FACT:

BABIES ARE WAY STRONGER THAN MOST PEOPLE REALIZE! SEVERAL STUDIES HAVE SHOWN THAT THE BEST WAY TO PROTECT YOUR BABY FROM ILLNESS IS **FOLLOWING THE RECOMMENDED VACCINE SCHEDULE.**

MYTH:

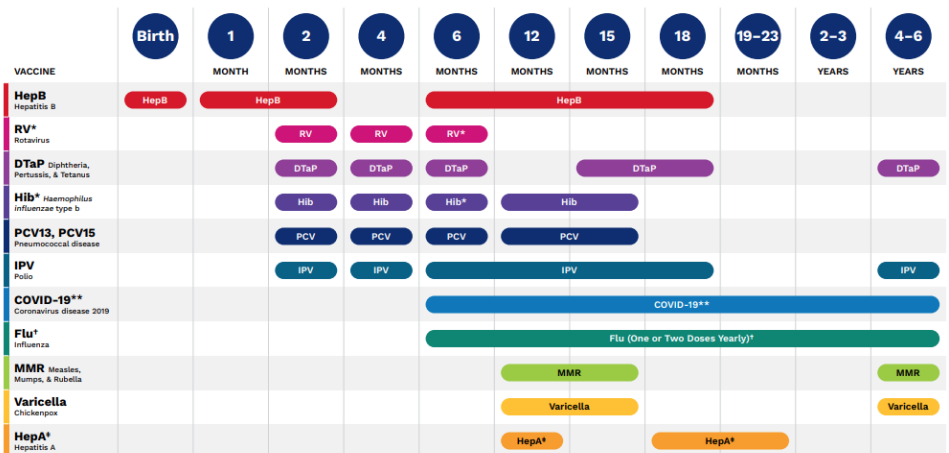
VACCINES WILL CAUSE MY CHILD TO HAVE AUTISM.

FACT:

THIS IDEA SPREAD FROM AN ARTICLE RELEASED IN 1997 PUBLISHED BY A DOCTOR (DR. ANDREW WAKEFIELD) WHO HAS SINCE LOST HIS MEDICAL LICENSE. THE SAMPLE SIZE FOR THIS STUDY WAS ONLY 12 PARTICIPANTS AND THE AUTHORS SUGGESTED THAT VACCINES MAY RESULT IN BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS. HOWEVER, SEVERAL STUDIES SINCE HAVE SHOWN THIS STUDY TO BE FALSE. THE TRUTH IS, THERE IS NO CORRELATION BETWEEN AN AUTISM DIAGNOSIS AND CHILDHOOD VACCINES.

SCHEDULE

KEEPING YOUR CHILD ON THEIR RECOMMENDED VACCINE SCHEDULE IS IMPORTANT TO THEIR FUTURE HEALTH



INFORMATION PROVIDED BY THE CDC. VISIT [CDC.GOV](https://www.cdc.gov) FOR MORE INFO

VACCINE INFORMATION

UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF CHILDHOOD VACCINATIONS AND HOW THEY KEEP YOUR FAMILY SAFE

HEPATITIS B

COMPLICATIONS OF HEPATITIS B CAN BE LIVER FAILURE, LIVER CANCER, AND DEATH. THE SPREAD OF HEPATITIS B CAN BE THROUGH BODY FLUIDS AND BLOOD.

ROTAVIRUS

ROTAVIRUS IS A STOMACH ILLNESS THAT CAN CAUSE SEVERE DIARRHEA AND DEHYDRATION. THE SPREAD OF ROTAVIRUS IS THROUGH THE MOUTH, FOR EXAMPLE DRINKING CONTAMINATED WATER.

DTAP

DIPHTHERIA CAN LEAD TO SWELLING OF THE HEART MUSCLE, HEART FAILURE, PARALYSIS, AND DEATH. PERTUSSIS, ALSO KNOWN AS WHOOPING COUGH, CAN LEAD TO SEVERE RESPIRATORY DISEASE, PNEUMONIA, AND DEATH. DIPHTHERIA AND PERTUSSIS ARE SPREAD VIA AIR DROPLETS AND DIRECT CONTACT. TETANUS CAN CAUSE BROKEN BONES, DIFFICULTY BREATHING, AND DEATH. TETANUS IS SPREAD VIA CUTS IN THE SKIN, FOR EXAMPLE BEING CUT BY A RUSTY NAIL.

HIB

HAEMOPHILUS INFLUENZAE TYPE B CAN LEAD TO MENINGITIS, PNEUMONIA, INTELLECTUAL DISABILITY, AND DEATH. THE SPREAD OF HIB IS VIA AIR DROPLETS AND DIRECT EXPOSURE.

PCV13

PNEUMOCOCCAL CAN LEAD TO PNEUMONIA, SEPSIS, MENINGITIS, AND DEATH. PCV IS SPREAD VIA AIR DROPLET AND DIRECT CONTACT.

IPV (POLIO)

POLI CAN LEAD TO SEVERE SYMPTOMS AND DEATH. THE SPREAD OF POLIO IS VIA AIR DROPLETS, DIRECT, CONTACT, OR ORALLY. THIS VACCINE IS AN INACTIVE VERSION OF POLIO. POLIO IS A VERY RARE CONDITION THANKS TO THE VACCINE, THE RARE CASE THAT MAY ARISE NOW IS USUALLY UNVACCINATED.

MMR

MEASLES CAN LEAD TO RASH, ENCEPHALITIS, PNEUMONIA, AND DEATH. MUMPS CAN LEAD TO ENCEPHALITIS, MENINGITIS, PNEUMONIA, AND DEATH. RUBELLA CAN LEAD TO SERIOUS EFFECTS IN PREGNANT WOMEN SUCH AS MISCARRIAGE, STILLBIRTH, BIRTH DEFECTS, AND DEATH. ALL THREE DISEASES ARE SPREAD VIA AIR DROPLETS AND DIRECT CONTACT.

VARICELLA

COMMON SIDE EFFECTS OF CHICKENPOX ARE ITCHING RASH, FEVER, AND FATIGUE. BUT MORE SERIOUS COMPLICATIONS OF CHICKENPOX ARE BLEEDING DISORDERS, ENCEPHALITIS, AND DEATH. VARICELLA IS SPREAD VIA AIR DROPLETS AND DIRECT CONTACT.

HEPATITIS A

HEPATITIS A CAN LEAD TO LIVER, KIDNEY, AND PANCREATIC FAILURE AS WELL AS DEATH. THE SPREAD OF HEPATITIS A CAN BE VIA CONTAMINATED FOOD AND WATER AND DIRECT CONTACT.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

WHERE SHOULD I LOOK FOR RESEARCH?

ALWAYS LOOK FOR **PEER REVIEWED SCIENTIFIC ARTICLES** WHEN DOING YOUR RESEARCH. AS A RULE OF THUMB IF YOU SEE A DOI NUMBER, THEN IT IS TYPICALLY A PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL ARTICLE.

WHERE DO I GET MY CHILD'S VACCINE?

TYPICALLY YOUR CHILD WILL RECEIVE THEIR VACCINES AT THEIR **WELLNESS VISITS WITH THEIR PEDIATRICIAN**. YOU CAN ALSO SCHEDULE VACCINES WITH THE **IMMUNIZATIONS CLINIC AT ABILENE-TAYLOR COUNTY PUBLIC HEALTH DISTRICT** AT 325-692-5600.

WHAT HAPPENS IF I MISS A DOSE?

IT IS VERY IMPORTANT TO **FOLLOW THE VACCINE SCHEDULE AS CLOSELY AS POSSIBLE** TO PROTECT YOUR CHILD AGAINST HARMFUL DISEASES. HOWEVER, **IF YOU MISS A DOSE YOUR PROVIDER CAN READJUST THE VACCINE SCHEDULE TO WHAT WILL WORK BEST FOR YOUR CHILD**. IF YOU ARE GOING TO MISS A VACCINE APPOINTMENT, CALL YOUR PEDIATRICIAN AS SOON AS POSSIBLE TO LET THEM KNOW.

ARE VACCINES REQUIRED FOR SCHOOL?

YES! IN TEXAS, **PUBLIC SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE REQUIRED TO HAVE CHILDHOOD IMMUNIZATIONS.** [CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE ABOUT REQUIRED VACCINATIONS FOR TEXAS.](#)

DO HOMESCHOOLED CHILDREN NEED VACCINATIONS?

YES! HOMESCHOOLED CHILDREN SHOULD STILL RECEIVE **VACCINES NOT ONLY FOR THEIR OWN SAFETY, BUT FOR THE SAFETY OF OTHER CHILDREN.** CHILDREN WHO ARE HOMESCHOOLED CAN STILL CONTRACT DEADLY DISEASES THAT CAN EASILY BE PREVENTED BY VACCINES.

WHAT ARE COMBO SHOTS, AND ARE THEY SAFE?

COMBO SHOTS ARE MULTIPLE DIFFERENT VACCINES GIVEN IN ONE SHOT, RATHER THAN SEVERAL SEPARATE SHOTS. FOR EXAMPLE, PENTACEL IS DTAP + HIB + IPV. THAT IS ONE SHOT MADE TO PROTECT AGAINST 5 DISEASES. THERE IS A BENEFIT TO COMBINING SHOTS, WHICH IS CHILDREN RECEIVE LESS POKES AT THE DOCTORS OFFICE. ADDITIONAL COMMON COMBINATION VACCINES ARE MMR (MEASLES, MUMPS, AND RUBELLA) AND DTAP (DIPHThERIA, TETANUS, AND PERTUSSIS).

WHO DO I CONTACT FOR MORE INFORMATION?

THERE ARE SEVERAL RESOURCES FOR MORE INFORMATION. **YOU CAN CONTACT YOUR CHILD'S PEDIATRICIAN, THE IMMUNIZATION CLINIC AT ATCPHD, OR THE EPIDEMIOLOGIST AT ATCPHD. TO SPEAK WITH A STAFF MEMBER AT THE HEALTH DEPARTMENT PLEASE CONTACT 325-692-5600.**

RESOURCES

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION. (2019, AUGUST 1). *ABOUT COMBINATION VACCINES FOR CHILDREN*. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION. [HTTPS://WWW.CDC.GOV/VACCINES/PARENTS/WHY-VACCINATE/COMBINATION-VACCINES.HTML](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/why-vaccinate/combination-vaccines.html)

CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION. (2023, APRIL 27). *BIRTH-18 YEARS IMMUNIZATION SCHEDULE - HEALTHCARE PROVIDERS*. CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION. [HTTPS://WWW.CDC.GOV/VACCINES/SCHEDULES/HCP/IMZ/CHILD-ADOLESCENT.HTML](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/schedules/hcp/imz/child-adolescent.html)

TEXAS DSHS. (2023). *TEXAS MINIMUM STATE VACCINE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADES K-12*. TEXAS MINIMUM STATE VACCINE REQUIREMENTS FOR STUDENTS GRADES K-12 | TEXAS DSHS. [HTTPS://WWW.DSHS.TEXAS.GOV/IMMUNIZATION-UNIT/TEXAS-SCHOOL-CHILD-CARE-FACILITY-IMMUNIZATION/TEXAS-MINIMUM-STATE-VACCINE-1](https://www.dshs.texas.gov/immunization-unit/texas-school-child-care-facility-immunization/texas-minimum-state-vaccine-1)

THE CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA. (2014, NOVEMBER 6). CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA. [HTTPS://WWW.CHOP.EDU/CENTERS-PROGRAMS/VACCINE-EDUCATION-CENTER/VACCINE-INGREDIENTS/FORMALDEHYDE](https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-ingredients/formaldehyde)

WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION. (2020). *VACCINES AND IMMUNIZATION: MYTHS MISCONCEPTIONS*. WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION. [HTTPS://WWW.WHO.INT/NEWS-ROOM/QUESTIONS-AND-ANSWERS/ITEM/VACCINES-AND-IMMUNIZATION-MYTHS-AND-MISCONCEPTIONS](https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/vaccines-and-immunization-myths-and-misconceptions)

RAO, T. S., & ANDRADE, C. (2011). *THE MMR VACCINE AND AUTISM: SENSATION, REFUTATION, RETRACTION, AND FRAUD*. INDIAN JOURNAL OF PSYCHIATRY, 53(2), 95-96. [HTTPS://DOI.ORG/10.4103/0019-5545.82529](https://doi.org/10.4103/0019-5545.82529)