

BC Immunization Schedule

Immunizations, also known as vaccinations, are important for people of all ages. They help your immune system recognize and quickly kill bacteria and viruses that can cause serious illness or death. Some immunizations are given in a single shot or oral dose, while others require several doses over a period of time. In B.C., immunizations are given by public health nurses in your local public health unit and by doctors, pharmacists and nurses in private travel and vaccine clinics. Some workplaces also have occupational health nurses who can give immunizations according to requirements and recommendations of employers.

The schedule below, listing vaccines provided free to residents of B.C., can help you determine when you or your family needs to be immunized. There is no need to delay immunizations because of colds or other minor illnesses, but when in doubt, discuss your concerns first with your health care provider.

Be sure to keep complete records of immunizations for you and your family. You will usually be asked to provide your child's immunization record when he or she is registered to enter day care, preschool,

kindergarten, school and certain programs in post-secondary institutions. Your immunization records are also an important source of information if you change health care providers.

The need for immunizations does not end with childhood. Thousands of people are hospitalized, and many die, as a result of influenza and other diseases that can be prevented by immunization. In addition to the vaccines below that are provided for free, there are other vaccines available that you may choose to purchase. Speak with your health care provider for information about these vaccines. By getting immunized, you protect yourself and others as well.

If you have questions about immunizations, speak with your health care provider or call **8-1-1** to speak with a registered nurse. For more information, see the HealthLinkBC Files on Disease Prevention at www.healthlinkbc.ca/healthfiles/DiseasePrevention.stm or visit www.immunizebc.ca.

Translation Services Are Available

If you are looking for information or advice in languages other than English, translation services are available in over 130 languages. After calling **8-1-1**, you will be connected with an English speaking health services representative. To get service in another language, simply state the language you are looking for (example say “**Arabic**”), and an interpreter will join the call.

Routine Immunization Schedule

Age Group → Vaccine ↓	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months	12 Months	18 Months	Starting at 4 Years of Age (Kindergarten Entry)	Grade 6	Grade 9	Adult	65 Years and Over	High Risk Program *	
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Hepatitis B, Polio, and Haemophilus influenzae type b (DTaP-HB-IPV-Hib) Vaccine	✓	✓	✓									
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Haemophilus influenzae Type b (DTaP-IPV-Hib) Vaccine					✓							
Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV 13) Vaccine	✓	✓		✓							✓ *	
Rotavirus Vaccine	✓	✓										
Hepatitis A Vaccine [a]			✓ Aboriginal infants only		✓ Aboriginal infants only	✓ Aboriginal children not previously immunized					✓ *	
Hepatitis B Vaccine [b]							✓ If eligible		✓ If eligible		✓ *	
Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine [c]				✓					✓ If susceptible			
Meningococcal C Conjugate (Men-C) Vaccine [d]	✓			✓					✓ If eligible		✓ *	
Meningococcal Quadrivalent Conjugate Vaccine								✓			✓ *	
Chickenpox (Varicella) Vaccine [e]				✓			✓ If eligible		✓ If susceptible			
Measles, Mumps, Rubella and Varicella (MMRV) Vaccine [e]						✓						
Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine [f]							✓				✓ *	
Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio (DTaP-IPV) Vaccine						✓						
Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine [g]								✓	✓ If eligible		✓ *	
Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td) Vaccine [h]									✓ Every 10 years	✓ Every 10 years		
Inactivated Influenza (Flu) Vaccine [i] Live Attenuated Influenza (Flu) Vaccine [i]			✓ Annually for infants 6 months to 4 years of age								✓ Annually	✓ *
Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine										✓ 1 time only	✓ *	

a. The hepatitis A vaccine is provided free to aboriginal children and adolescents aged 6 months to 18 years living both on-reserve and off-reserve. Infants will receive the first dose at 6 months of age and the second dose at 18 months of age. Older children and adolescents need 2 doses of the vaccine. The second dose needs to be given at least 6 months after the first dose.

b. The hepatitis B vaccine is provided free to babies in B.C. as a series of 3 doses at 2, 4 and 6 months of age in combination with other routine childhood vaccines. Children who did not complete their infant hepatitis B vaccine series or have never received the vaccine will be offered hepatitis B vaccine for free in grade 6.

The hepatitis B vaccine is provided free to people born in 1980 or later who have never received the vaccine or have not received the recommended number of doses for their age.

c. Anyone born in 1970 or later that has not been immunized or does not have immunity to measles, mumps and rubella should get 2 doses of the MMR vaccine.

d. The Men-C vaccine is provided free to people born before 2002 who are 24 years of age and under who did not receive a dose of the vaccine on or after their 10th birthday.

e. The chickenpox vaccine is provided free as a series of 2 doses. The first dose of vaccine is given at 12 months of age and the second starting at 4 years of age before a child enters kindergarten. The second dose is given as a combination vaccine (MMRV) that also provides protection against measles, mumps and rubella. In grade 6, the chickenpox vaccine is offered to students who did not receive 2 doses when they were younger. People 13 years of age and over who have never received the vaccine also need 2 doses. Children and adults who have had chickenpox or shingles disease, diagnosed by a health care provider for those born in 2004 or later, at 1 year of age or older do not need the chickenpox vaccine. These children should get the MMR vaccine at 4 years of age.

f. The HPV vaccine is provided free to girls in grade 6 as a series of 2 doses. The vaccine is also provided free to women born in 1994 or later

who are 26 years of age and under who have not received the vaccine.

The vaccine is also provided free to males who are at increased risk of HPV infection. For more information on who can get the vaccine for free see [HealthLinkBC File #101b Human Papillomavirus \(HPV\) Vaccines](#).

g. The Tdap vaccine is provided free to adults who were not immunized against pertussis in childhood, or whose immunization history is unknown.

A booster dose of the Tdap vaccine is recommended, but not provided for free, for adults 18 years of age and older who were immunized against pertussis in childhood but have not received a pertussis-containing vaccine in adulthood.

h. A person with a deep dirty wound or bite may need a dose of tetanus vaccine if it has been 5 or more years since they received their last dose of vaccine.

i. Annual influenza immunization is recommended for people at high risk of serious illness from influenza and people able to transmit or spread influenza to those at high risk of serious illness from influenza. For a complete list, see [HealthLinkBC File #12d Influenza \(Flu\) Vaccine](#) and [HealthLinkBC File #12e Live Attenuated Influenza \(Flu\) Vaccine](#). To find a clinic offering influenza vaccine visit www.immunizebc.ca/clinics/flu.

* High Risk Program: British Columbia provides many vaccines free of charge to some groups of people, such as those with chronic illness or weakened immune systems. Contact your health care provider, or call **8-1-1** for more information.

Note: The vaccine schedule can change. Speak with your health care provider, or call **8-1-1** if you have questions.

Immunization table developed and reviewed by HealthLinkBC, BC Ministry of Health, and BC Centre for Disease Control.

For more information on immunizations, visit ImmunizeBC at www.immunizebc.ca/.