

# World Immunisation Week



World Immunisation Week is a global public health campaign to promote awareness and increase rates of immunisation against vaccine-preventable diseases around the world. It helps highlight the need for collective action to protect people of all ages from disease.

World Immunisation Week takes place each year during the last week of April between **24<sup>th</sup> to 30<sup>th</sup>** of the month.

This year's theme, selected by the WHO is, 'Long Life for All - Vaccines, in the pursuit of a long life well lived'



## What are immunisations and vaccinations?

Immunisation is the process of giving a vaccine to a person in order to protect them against a particular disease. Vaccines are lab-made substances, which use weakened or dead parts of a virus or a disease, to stimulate and train the immune system to produce antibodies (proteins that fight diseases), exactly like they would if you were exposed to the disease. Getting the vaccine will not lead to sickness because of how it's made.



## Why are vaccines safe and important?

All vaccines go through many trials and tests to make sure they will not harm the human body. They are important as they greatly benefit our immune system.

- Vaccination is the most important thing we can do to protect ourselves and our children against harmful diseases.
- Vaccines teach our immune system how to create antibodies to fight diseases.

## What are the diseases that vaccines can protect us from?

While the world focuses on critically important new vaccines to protect against COVID-19, there is still a need for routine vaccinations. Many children have not been vaccinated during the global pandemic, leaving them at risk of serious diseases such as measles and polio.

### Top 10 vaccine-preventable diseases

- Measles
- Whooping Cough (Pertussis)
- Flu
- Polio
- Pneumococcal Disease
- Tetanus
- Meningococcal Disease
- Hepatitis B
- Mumps
- Hib (Haemophilus Influenzae Type B) pneumonia



## Who should not get the vaccine?

Infants, young children, and adults can get vaccinated, but people with some medical conditions shouldn't get specific vaccines or should wait before getting them. These conditions can include:

- Chronic illnesses or treatments (like chemotherapy) that affect the immune system.
- Severe and life-threatening allergies to vaccine ingredients, which are very rare.
- If you have severe illness and a high fever on the day of vaccination.

## Facts vs. myths about immunisations

### Myth #1: Vaccines cause autism

This is not true. Many scientific studies have shown there is **no link between autism and immunisation, including the MMR vaccine.**

### Myth #2: Vaccines contain toxic ingredients

Vaccines do not contain toxic ingredients. Vaccines go through extensive testing to ensure their safety and effectiveness.

### Myth #3: The flu shot causes the flu

The flu is spread mainly through sneezing, coughing, and close contact with someone who has it. Studies have not shown that flu shots cause the flu.

## Facts about vaccines

- New-born babies are immune to many diseases because they have antibodies they received from their mothers. This immunity goes away during the first year of life.
- If an unvaccinated child is exposed to a disease germ, the child's body may not be strong enough to fight the disease.
- Immunising individuals helps to protect the health of our community, which is especially important for those people who cannot be immunised



**Vaccine-preventable diseases have a costly impact, resulting in doctor's visits, hospitalisations, and premature deaths!**

**Sick children can also cause parents to lose time from work.**