

Childhood Vaccines

Caregiver Information

At Eisner Health, your baby's health is our top priority.



What is the **polio** vaccine, and who needs it?

The polio vaccine protects against polio disease or poliomyelitis.

- Polio is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by poliovirus. It infects a person's spinal cord, leading to paralysis, which means you are not able to move parts of your body.
- Some people have no symptoms and recover without complications. Some will have sore throat, fever, tiredness, nausea, headache or stomach pain.
- A smaller number of people will develop paresthesia (feeling of pins and needles in the legs), meningitis (brain or spinal cord infection) or paralysis or weakness in the arms or legs.



Children need four doses of the polio vaccine, one at each of these ages: 2 months, 4 months, 6 to 18 months, and 4 to 6 years.

How does polio disease or poliomyelitis spread?

Poliovirus is very contagious and spreads through person-to-person contact. It lives in an infected person's throat and intestines. The virus can contaminate food and water in unsanitary conditions.

Poliovirus enters the body through the mouth. It spreads through:

- Contact with the feces (poop) of an infected person.
- Droplets from a sneeze or cough of an infected person.

I don't know anybody who has had polio. Does my baby need this vaccine?

YES

- Polio used to be one of the most feared diseases in the United States. Before the vaccine was created in 1955, it killed thousands of children each year in the United States and paralyzed many more.
- While polio was eliminated from the United States in 1979, cases still occur through infected people traveling to the United States or unvaccinated people contracting it in other countries.
- Polio is a very contagious disease. It spreads easily from person to person and is a serious and life-threatening disease, which is why the vaccine is so important.

The reason you don't typically see polio today is because so many children are vaccinated against the disease. If we stop vaccinating against these diseases, they can reemerge.

Receiving vaccines is an important part of a child's health.

Vaccines give your child the antibodies they need to fight off serious diseases. As a parent or caregiver, we want you to feel confident about making the choice to protect your child.

Please talk with your provider if you have any questions about vaccinations.



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