

## KEY MESSAGES FOR PARENTS

### Vaccination During COVID-19

Michigan parents need to know that it's very important to keep their children up to date on vaccinations, especially during this pandemic.

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- Fewer Michigan children are currently up to date on their routine vaccines because of postponed well-child visits during the COVID-19 pandemic, making it easier for diseases to spread.
- Statewide toddler vaccination coverage has dropped 4.5 percentage points, from 74.1% in November 2019 to 69.6% in February 2021.
- Statewide adolescent vaccination coverage has dropped 2.8 percentage points, from 77.7% in November 2019 to 74.9% in February 2021.
- Many healthcare providers have procedures in place ensure patients can safely come in for well visits and to get caught up on immunizations, including checking in from the car, limiting how many people can accompany a child and requiring face masks.
- At a time when our healthcare system is already overwhelmed, it's important that we avoid outbreaks of preventable potentially deadly diseases, like measles, pertussis (whooping cough) and mumps.
- Michigan's economy and public health system can't afford another shutdown because of this pandemic and an outbreak of another serious communicable disease at the same time.

The COVID-19 pandemic is a stark reminder of how diseases without vaccines can harm our nation's economy and public health.

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- Before vaccines, parents in the United States could expect that every year:
  - Polio would paralyze 10,000 children.
  - Pertussis (whooping cough) would kill 8,000 infants.
  - Measles would infect about 4 million children, killing about 500.



- Rubella (German measles) would cause birth defects and intellectual disabilities in as many as 20,000 newborns.
- Diphtheria would be one of the most common causes of death in school-aged children.
- A bacterium called Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) would cause meningitis in 15,000 children, leaving many with permanent brain damage.

Vaccines protect our children and teens from 16 vaccine-preventable diseases by age 18.

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- Routine childhood immunization among children born over the past 25 years (1994-2018) is estimated to prevent:
  - 419 million illnesses,
  - 8 million hospitalizations, and
  - 936,000 early deaths over the course of their lifetimes.

Why is it so important to follow the CDC-recommended schedule?

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- Following the recommended immunization schedule protects infants and children by providing immunity early in life when they are most at risk for getting seriously ill from these diseases if they are exposed.
- The recommended schedule has been developed so that your child is protected and receiving the vaccines at the age when he or she will have the best response to develop immunity.
- Infants and young children who do not follow the recommended immunization schedules and instead spread out shots—or leave out shots—are at risk of developing diseases during the time that the shots are delayed.
- This results in more frequent visits to the doctor's office, more stress and anticipation of shots and increased costs for you.



- The CDC-recommended schedule is the only schedule that has been carefully tested, studied, and reviewed by medical experts prior to being recommended for children.

### What should people know about COVID-19 Vaccines?

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- Currently, three vaccines are authorized and recommended in the United States to prevent COVID-19: Pfizer-BioNTech (for people 12 and older), Moderna (for people 18 and older), and Johnson & Johnson/Janssen (for people 18 and older). Moderna recently reported that its vaccine is safe and effective in children ages 12 to 17. Moderna plans to submit its findings to the Food and Drug Administration in early June.
- All three vaccines are highly effective at preventing serious illness and death.
- Millions of people in the United States have received COVID-19 vaccines.
- You may experience some side effects after COVID-19 vaccination. This means your body is working to build protection.
- You can get a COVID-19 vaccine and other vaccines at the same visit.
- The safety monitoring of these vaccines is the most extensive in U.S. history. CDC's Immunization Safety Office conducts four primary vaccine safety activities: the Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS), the Vaccine Safety Datalink (VSD), the Clinical Immunization Safety Assessment (CISA) Project, and Emergency Preparedness for Vaccine Safety.
- V-safe is a new smartphone-based health checker for people who receive COVID-19 vaccines. It uses text messaging and web surveys from CDC to check in with vaccine recipients following COVID-19 vaccination.
- Women younger than 50 years old should be aware of the rare risk of blood clots with low platelets after vaccination with Johnson & Johnson/Janssen. They can receive the Pfizer-BioNTech or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine instead.
- On May 17, the US Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) COVID-19 Vaccine Safety Technical (VaST) reported on myocarditis following mRNA vaccines. It concluded that there are relatively few reports of myocarditis to date and that these cases seem to occur predominantly in adolescents and



young adults, more often in males than females, more often following dose 2 than dose 1, and typically within 4 days after vaccination. Most cases appear to be mild, and follow-up of cases is ongoing.

- On May 23, the American Heart Association/American Stroke Association released a statement that recognized CDC's alert to healthcare professionals about reports of myocarditis after vaccination, but strongly urged all adults and children ages 12 and older in the U.S. to receive a COVID vaccine as soon as they can. They stated, "We remain confident that the benefits of vaccination far exceed the very small, rare risks."

Doctors and other medical professionals agree: Vaccines are safe and effective at preventing disease and protecting communities from outbreaks.

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- It's normal to have questions—it makes you a good parent!
- Make sure you are getting answers from credible sources. Talk to your child's doctor and explore resources like [IVaccinate.org](https://www.IVaccinate.org).
- I Vaccinate provides Michigan parents with information and tools based on real medical science and research to help them protect their kids.
- Resources include a parent-focused, Michigan-specific website ([IVaccinate.org](https://www.IVaccinate.org)), social media communities (@IVaccinateMI on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram), and more.

