

# Risks of Delaying or Skipping Vaccines

## [Español \(Spanish\)](#)

If you choose to delay, skip, or reject all or some vaccines entirely, there can be risks. With this decision comes an important responsibility to protect your child's life, or the life others in your family, community, or other countries you visit. When your child is being evaluated, **the doctor will need to consider the possibility that your child has a vaccine-preventable disease (VPD)**; while uncommon, VPDs still occur. Keep a [vaccination record](#) easily accessible and share it with the doctor.

### alert icon

**It is your responsibility** to notify the doctor's office, urgent care facility, ambulance personnel, or emergency room staff that your child has not been fully vaccinated.

Others who help your child can take precautions, such as isolating your child, so that the disease does not spread to others especially

- Infants, who are too young to be fully vaccinated.
- People are those with weaker immune systems, such as some people with cancer, who are not vaccinated due to certain medical conditions.

During an outbreak in your community:



Inform your child's school or childcare facility about your child's vaccination status.

Sometimes vaccine-preventable diseases cause outbreaks (clusters of cases in a given area).

For some diseases, one case is enough to cause concern in a community. Such as measles one of the most contagious diseases. This disease and others spread quickly among people who are not immune.

- **Get protection by getting vaccinated immediately.**
- Take your child out of school, daycare, or organized activities such as playgroups or sports, if you are asked.
- Be prepared to keep your child home for several days up to several weeks.
- Learn about the disease and how it is spread.
- Contact your child's doctor or your local or state's health department to get their guidelines for determining when your child is no longer at risk.
- Respond to your [state or local health department](#) who track infectious disease outbreaks in your community.

In most cases, there is no way to know beforehand if a child will get a mild or serious (life-threatening) case.

### **If you suspect your child is exposed to a vaccine-preventable disease:**

- Be aware that your child can catch diseases from people who don't have any symptoms.
- Learn the early signs and symptoms of the disease.
- Seek immediate medical help if your child or any family members develop early signs or symptoms of the disease.
- Follow recommendations to isolate your child from others, including family members, and especially infants and people with weakened immune systems.
- Be aware that for some vaccine-preventable diseases, there are medicines to treat infected people and medicines to keep people they come in contact with from getting the disease.
- Ask your child's doctor about other ways to protect your family members and anyone else who may come into contact with your child.

alert icon

**Children do not receive any known benefits from delaying vaccines or skipping vaccines.**

If you travel:



Before traveling, learn about possible disease risks and vaccines that will protect your family.

Look up the countries where you will travel on the [CDC travelers' information website](#) before traveling.

travel icon

**Travelers are exposed to diseases during travel or by others that traveled and returned to the U.S.**

- Any vaccine preventable disease can strike at any time in the U.S.; all of these diseases still circulate in the U.S. or elsewhere in the world.
- Vaccine-preventable **diseases that still circulate** in the U.S. include:
  - [Whooping cough](#)
  - [Chickenpox](#)
  - [Hib](#) (a cause of meningitis)
  - [Flu](#) (Influenza)
- Vaccine-preventable diseases can **range from mild to severe and life-threatening.**