



## NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION MONTH

BY DANIELLE OLIPRA

---

National Immunization Awareness Month occurs every August to highlight the importance of vaccination for people of all ages. Keep reading about the importance of vaccines and make sure you and your family are up to date on all vaccinations this fall!

### What is a vaccination?

Vaccines can help protect against certain diseases by teaching your body how to fight off a future infection. Vaccinations can be developed using different approaches including the use of a live, weakened virus; un-live virus; toxoids (toxins); parts of a virus or bacteria; or antigens of a virus or bacteria.

Vaccines help to kickstart your body's natural immune response and build up immunity naturally before you're ever exposed to the disease. This is part of your body's normal response to developing immunity, and why certain vaccinations are recommended for children. Some vaccines have waning immunity, so boosters may be recommended. Flu vaccines are developed based on scientists' forecasts of which flu strains will be the predominant strains the next year and is why adults and children should be vaccinated for the flu each year.

### Why are vaccines important?

Vaccines not only protect the person receiving the vaccine but also help prevent the spread of certain diseases to people who are most vulnerable, like those with weakened immune systems and infants who can't be vaccinated yet. When most of a population is vaccinated, what's called herd immunity is developed, and that helps protect the more vulnerable people.

You may need a certificate of immunization to enroll your child in school. Most parents worry anytime their child needs to have a shot, but vaccines are completely safe to receive and protect your child from serious illnesses like the flu, measles, and pneumonia. Talk to your healthcare provider about all vaccinations you and your family should receive and make sure your children are up to date on all their vaccinations before returning to school this fall.



## Recommendations

The CDC has a **recommended schedule** for children's vaccinations from birth to the age of two, with additional doses of some vaccines into adolescence. You should also be vaccinated for the flu each year before October or as soon as you are able to receive a vaccine. National Immunization Month is also a critical time to get vaccinated against COVID-19 or get a booster if you are due!

### Why should your staff be vaccinated?

According to the EEOC (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission), you can require employees to get vaccinated for COVID-19 if doing so does not violate discrimination laws, including legal requirements for disability and religious accommodations. A vaccinated staff promises a

safer environment for all your customers. Vaccinated workers are less likely to contract and spread COVID-19 and other illnesses to other workers and customers. A healthy workforce also saves a company money when fewer people miss work due to illness.

Other vaccine considerations for the workplace include a Hepatitis B vaccine program for employees who may be exposed to bloodborne pathogens at work. Employers may also promote vaccinations by holding annual flu vaccine clinics.

#### Resources:

1. [National Immunization Awareness Month 2022 - National Center for Health in Public Housing \(nchph.org\)](https://www.nchph.org/national-immunization-awareness-month-2022)
2. [Promoting Vaccination in the Workplace | CDC](https://www.cdc.gov/workplace/immunization)