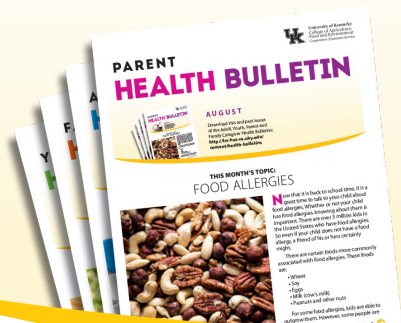




University of Kentucky  
College of Agriculture,  
Food and Environment  
Cooperative Extension Service

# PARENT

# HEALTH BULLETIN



## AUGUST 2022

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### THIS MONTH'S TOPIC:

## CATCH UP ON CHECKUPS AND VACCINES



**A**ugust is National Immunization Awareness Month (NIAM). This annual observance highlights the importance of getting recommended vaccines throughout your lifespan. The COVID-19 pandemic has affected all aspects of life, including your ability to attend important appointments and receive routine vaccinations. As your family gets back to routines, it is important for your child to catch up on checkups and recommended vaccines to help protect their health now and in the future.

### Why vaccinate?

Vaccination helps protect your child's health. On-time vaccination throughout childhood is essential because it helps provide immunity before children are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases. Routine vaccinations during childhood

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# Vaccines prevent risks associated with vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks and helps keep communities safe.

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help prevent 14 different diseases. Vaccines are tested to ensure that they are safe and effective for children to receive at the recommended ages.

As your children head back to school this fall, it's particularly important for you to work with your child's doctor or nurse to make sure they get caught up on missed well-child visits and recommended vaccines. A well-child checkup is helpful in more ways than one:

- The doctor tracks your child's growth and development.
- You can ask the doctor questions about your child's health.
- Your child gets recommended vaccinations.

So schedule back-to-school vaccines for your children and anyone else in your family who has fallen behind on receiving routine vaccinations. The entire family should catch up on vaccines. Vaccines prevent risks associated with vaccine-preventable diseases and outbreaks and helps keep communities safe.

Before your well-child visit, prepare by getting a list of vaccines your child may need and locating your child's personal immunization record to take to your appointment. An up-to-date record tells your doctor exactly what shots your child has already received. If you have questions about vaccination, ask your child's doctor or health-care team.

During a well-child visit, the Centers for Disease Control encourages parents to make vaccines less stressful by following these simple ways to support your child before, during, and after.

- 1. Ask for a sweet solution.** Tasting something sweet can help reduce your little one's pain response. If your child is 2 or younger, ask your child's doctor to give your child a sweet solution of sucrose or glucose one to two minutes before the shot.
- 2. Ask for a pain-relieving ointment or spray.** Ask your child's doctor for a pain-relieving ointment, which blocks pain

signals from the skin. Alternatively, request a cooling spray, which is applied on your child's arm or leg right before the shot.

- 3. Be honest and calm.** Kids are smart, so take time to explain in simple terms what to expect. Explain that your child may feel a little pinch and it will go away very fast. Use words like "pressure" or "poke" rather than "pain" or "shot." Remain upbeat and relaxed before, during, and especially after shots.
- 4. Bring your child's favorite things.** Bring anything your child finds comforting, such as a favorite toy, blanket, or book, to help them focus on something pleasant.
- 5. Distract your child.** Right before the shot, call your child's name, sing your child's favorite song, tell a story, or just act plain silly to pull your child's attention away from the shot giver.
- 6. Big kids need support too.** If your child is older, you can take deep breaths with them to help "blow out" the pain. Have them imagine the pain is leaving their mouth as they breathe out. Tell a story or point out interesting things in the room to help create distractions.
- 7. Care after the shot.** Your child may have mild reactions, such as pain and swelling where the shot was given or a fever. These are common and will go away soon. Contact your child's doctor if anything concerns you.

Help protect your child's health by keeping them on track with recommended vaccinations. Have questions about vaccines? Talk to your child's doctor.

#### REFERENCES:

- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/growing/images/global/CDC-Growing-Up-with-Vaccines.pdf>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/visit/before-during-after-shots.html>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/visit/vaccination-during-COVID-19.html>

ADULT  
**HEALTH BULLETIN**

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