

## BC Immunization Schedule

Immunizations, also known as vaccinations, are important for people of all ages. They help your immune system recognize and quickly kill bacteria and viruses that can cause serious illness or death. Some immunizations are given in a single shot or oral dose, while others require several doses over a period of time. In B.C., immunizations are given by public health nurses in your local public health unit and by doctors, pharmacists and nurses in private travel and vaccine clinics. Some workplaces also have occupational health nurses who can give immunizations according to requirements and recommendations of employers.

The schedule below, listing vaccines provided free to residents of B.C., can help you determine when you or your family needs to be immunized. There is no need to delay immunizations because of colds or other minor illnesses, but when in doubt, discuss your concerns first with your health care provider.

Be sure to keep complete records of immunizations for you and your family. A child's immunization record is usually requested when he or she is registered to enter day care, preschool, kindergarten, school and certain programs in post-secondary institutions. If you have any questions about immunizations, speak with your health care provider.

The need for immunizations does not end with childhood. Thousands of people are hospitalized, and many die, as a result of influenza and other diseases that can be prevented by immunization. By getting immunized, you protect yourself and others as well. If you have questions, see the [HealthLinkBC Files on Disease Prevention](#), call **8-1-1** for more information, or visit [www.immunizebc.ca](http://www.immunizebc.ca).

There are vaccines that are not available free to the public but are important for preventing serious illness or death. Speak with your health care provider for information about these vaccines.

## Routine Immunization Schedule

Age Group → Vaccine ↓	2 Months	4 Months	6 Months	12 Months	18 Months	Starting at 4 Years of Age (Kindergarten Entry)	Grade 6	Grade 9	Adult	65 Years and Over	High Risk Program *	
<a href="#">Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Hepatitis B, Polio, and Haemophilus influenzae type b (DTaP-HB-IPV-Hib) Vaccine</a>	✓	✓	✓									
<a href="#">Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio, Haemophilus influenzae Type b (DTaP-IPV-Hib) Vaccine</a>					✓							
<a href="#">Pneumococcal Conjugate (PCV 13) Vaccine</a>	✓	✓		✓							✓ *	
<a href="#">Rotavirus Vaccine</a>	✓	✓										
<a href="#">Hepatitis A Vaccine [a]</a>			✓ Aboriginal infants only		✓ Aboriginal infants only	✓ Aboriginal children not previously immunized					✓ *	
<a href="#">Hepatitis B Vaccine [b]</a>							✓ If eligible		✓ If eligible		✓ *	
<a href="#">Measles, Mumps, Rubella (MMR) Vaccine [c]</a>				✓		✓			✓ If susceptible			
<a href="#">Meningococcal C Conjugate (Men-C) Vaccine [d]</a>	✓			✓			✓				✓ *	
<a href="#">Chickenpox (Varicella) Vaccine [e]</a>				✓		✓	✓ If eligible		✓ If susceptible			
<a href="#">Human Papillomavirus (HPV) Vaccine [f]</a>							✓	✓				
<a href="#">Diphtheria, Tetanus, Pertussis, Polio (DTaP-IPV) Vaccine</a>						✓						
<a href="#">Tetanus, Diphtheria, Pertussis (Tdap) Vaccine</a>								✓			✓ *	
<a href="#">Tetanus and Diphtheria (Td) Vaccine [g]</a>									✓ Every 10 years	✓ Every 10 years		
<a href="#">Influenza (Flu) Vaccine [h]</a>			✓ Annually for infants 6 months to 4 years of age								✓ Annually	✓ *
<a href="#">Pneumococcal Polysaccharide Vaccine</a>										✓ 1 time only	✓ *	

a. The hepatitis A vaccine is provided free to aboriginal children and adolescents aged 6 months to 18 years living both on-reserve and off-reserve. Infants will receive the first dose at 6 months of age and the second dose at 18 months of age. Older children and adolescents need 2 doses of the vaccine. The second dose needs to be given at least 6 months after the first dose.

b. The hepatitis B vaccine is provided free to babies in B.C. as a series of 3 doses at 2, 4 and 6 months of age in combination with other routine childhood vaccines. Children who did not complete their infant hepatitis B vaccine series or have never received the vaccine will be offered hepatitis B vaccine for free in grade 6.

The hepatitis B vaccine is provided free to people born in 1980 or later who have never received the vaccine or have not received the recommended number of doses for their age.

c. Anyone born after 1956 that has not been immunized or does not have immunity to measles, mumps and rubella should get 2 doses of the MMR vaccine.

d. The Men-C vaccine is provided free to people born in 1988 or later who have never received the vaccine.

e. The chickenpox vaccine is provided free as a series of 2 doses. The first dose of vaccine is given at 12 months of age and the second starting at 4 years of age before a child enters kindergarten. A second dose of the vaccine is offered to students in grade 6 who did not receive 2 doses when they were younger. People 13 years of age and over who have never received the vaccine also need 2 doses. It is not necessary for those who had chickenpox or shingles disease at 1 year of age or older to get the vaccine.

f. Two doses of the HPV vaccine, Gardasil™, are provided free to girls in grade 6. A 3<sup>rd</sup> dose is given to girls in grade 9. The HPV vaccine is also offered to girls in grade 9 who have not

received the vaccine. Girls born in 1994 or later who were eligible for the HPV vaccine but did not receive it may contact their local health unit to get vaccinated at no cost.

Although the HPV vaccine, Gardasil™, is only provided free to eligible girls in B.C., the vaccine has been approved for use in females 9 to 45 years of age and males 9 to 25 years of age. Contact your health care provider for more information.

g. A person with a deep dirty wound or bite may need a dose of tetanus vaccine if it has been 5 or more years since they received their last dose of vaccine.

h. Annual influenza immunization is recommended for people at high risk of serious illness from influenza and people able to transmit or spread influenza to those at high risk of serious illness from influenza. For a complete list, see HealthLinkBC File [#12d Influenza \(Flu\) Vaccine](#).

\* High Risk Program: British Columbia provides many vaccines free of charge to some groups of people, such as those with chronic illness or weakened immune systems. Contact your health care provider or doctor, or call **8-1-1** for more information.

Note: The vaccine schedule can change. Speak with your public health nurse or doctor, or call **8-1-1** if you have questions.

Immunization table developed and reviewed by HealthLinkBC, BC Ministry of Health, and BC Centre for Disease Control.

For more HealthLinkBC File topics, visit [www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca/healthfiles) or your local public health unit.

Click on [www.HealthLinkBC.ca](http://www.HealthLinkBC.ca) or call **8-1-1** for non-emergency health information and services in B.C.

For deaf and hearing-impaired assistance, call 7-1-1 in B.C.

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