



What to Know about Vaccines

Vaccines save lives and protect us, our loved ones, and our communities from serious diseases like measles, flu, chickenpox, whooping cough, and more.

Why get vaccinated?

- Vaccines help your body's natural defenses protect you against diseases. When you're vaccinated, your immune system learns to recognize and fight germs, protecting you against future exposure.
- Vaccines help prevent serious illnesses. Some vaccines can even prevent some cancers.
- Getting vaccinated protects people who cannot get certain vaccines, like babies, older adults, and people with weakened immune systems.
- Vaccines are safe and approved by medical experts.
- **Many vaccines are free or low cost.**



Who needs to get vaccinated?

Vaccines aren't just for babies! Vaccines are important for people of all ages—from children and teens to adults and older adults.



When to get vaccinated

Talk to a doctor about which vaccines you and your family need. To learn more about vaccines recommended at every age and stage of life, visit health.ri.gov/vaccines.



Where to get vaccinated

You can find local vaccine clinics and programs in these places:

- [Asthenis Public Health Hub](#) (401-473-3958): Offers a range of vaccinations for:
 - Children without health insurance or a regular doctor.
 - Adults without health insurance.
 - Adults with health insurance who are unable to pay all or some costs for vaccines.
- [Vaccinate Before You Graduate](#): A program to help middle and high school students stay up to date on their vaccines. Call the Health Information Line at **401-222-5960 / RI Relay 711** to learn more.



Information for travelers

When traveling outside the country, you may be exposed to different diseases. It is especially important that you and your family members are up to date on your vaccines before you travel. Certain vaccines may be required or recommended before traveling internationally. Some require more than one dose for full protection. Start planning for travel vaccines four to six weeks before you leave. For help finding a vaccine clinic for travelers, visit health.ri.gov/immunization/information/travelers or call **401-222-5960 / RI Relay 711**.



Vaccines: get the facts

It's important to understand the facts about vaccines to make informed decisions about your health and the health of your family.

✗ MYTH: People should get vaccinated only because it's required.

✓ FACT: While vaccine requirements may encourage widespread immunization, the best reason to get vaccinated is to protect your health and the health of those around you.

✗ MYTH: I can only get vaccines at my doctor's office.

✓ FACT: You can also get vaccines at pharmacies, vaccine clinics, schools, and workplaces.

✗ MYTH: Vaccines contain many harmful ingredients.

✓ FACT: Vaccines are safe, with ingredients carefully tested for safety, and contain ingredients at a dose even lower than the dose we're naturally exposed to in our environment.

✗ MYTH: Vaccines can change my DNA.

✓ FACT: Vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA.

✗ MYTH: COVID-19 vaccines were not tested before approval.

✓ FACT: COVID-19 vaccines were rigorously tested before approval.

✗ MYTH: Vaccines make you sick.

✓ FACT: After getting a vaccine, you might feel mild side effects like aches or a low-grade fever. This means your body is building protection.

Sources:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention,
[cdc.gov/vaccine-safety/vaccines](https://www.cdc.gov/vaccine-safety/vaccines)

World Health Organization,
[who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/how-do-vaccines-work](https://www.who.int/news-room/feature-stories/detail/how-do-vaccines-work)

Trusted resources

Help stop the spread of vaccine myths! These trusted resources can help people make health decisions for themselves and their families:

- Let's Get Real Campaign:
letsgetrealaboutvaccines.org
- Rhode Island Department of Health:
health.ri.gov/vaccines



Taking care of your health is an act of love

Getting vaccinated is a sign of strength. Do it for yourself, your family, and your community!



It is important to get the care you need to stay healthy. If you have legal questions related to immigrants' rights to confidentially access healthcare services, call Dorcas International at **401-784-8607**.



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