



2019 NIIW Key Messages

Use these key messages to promote the importance of on-time vaccination through age 2 years during National Infant Immunization Week (NIIW).

Vaccinating on time, every time in a baby's first two years of life provides the best protection against dangerous diseases.

- The recommended immunization schedule is set up to provide infants and children with protection from 14 potentially life-threatening diseases early in life when they are most vulnerable.
- Diseases that used to be common in the U.S. are rarely seen now. That's because vaccines work and are safe.
- Even when your baby gets multiple vaccines at a visit, the vaccines do not overload the immune system. Every day, your baby's immune system successfully fights off thousands of antigens – the parts of germs that cause their immune system to respond to diseases.
- Vaccines contain only a tiny amount of antigens compared to the antigens your baby encounters every day.
- Delaying or skipping vaccines can put children at risk for diseases that can cause serious health problems.
- Check to see what vaccines your child needs by requesting their immunization record from the Maine Immunization Program.

Protecting newborns starts with vaccinating mom during pregnancy.

- Two vaccines that are important to get during pregnancy are whooping cough (pertussis) and flu vaccine.
- After a pregnant woman gets vaccinated, her body creates antibodies to fight the disease. The antibodies get passed to her baby before they are born and will protect the baby until they are old enough to start getting their own vaccines.
- Vaccines recommended during pregnancy are safe for pregnant women and their unborn babies.

NIIW 2019 KEY MESSAGES

- Pregnancy is a great time to learn about what vaccines your baby will need and when. Organizations like these are a great place to get reliable information:
 - The Maine Immunization Program (www.ImmunizeME.org)
 - American Academy of Pediatrics (<http://www2.aap.org/immunization/>)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (www.cdc.gov/vaccines)
 - Vaccine Education Center at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia (www.chop.edu/centersprograms/vaccine-education-center)

Cost should not be a barrier to getting vaccinated.

- The Maine Immunization Program (MIP) help make sure children get vaccinated on time by not letting cost get in the way of vaccinating.
- Through the MIP, all children 18 years and younger, regardless of insurance status are eligible to receive vaccine at no cost. Your doctor's office may charge an administration fee. Even if you cannot afford the fee, you will not be turned away.
- To see if your clinic participates in the MIP, visit:
<https://www.maine.gov/dhhs/mecdc/infectious-disease/immunization/active-vfc-provider-sites.shtml>