



One minute guide to...

VACCINATIONS

What are they?

Vaccines teach your immune system how to create antibodies that protect you from diseases. It is much safer for your immune system to learn this through vaccination than by catching the diseases and treating them.

Why get vaccinated?

Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent infectious diseases. Since vaccines were introduced in the UK, diseases like smallpox, polio and tetanus that used to kill or disable millions of people are either gone or seen very rarely.

Vaccine do:



- protect you and your child from many serious and potentially deadly diseases
- stop diseases spreading to people who cannot have vaccines
- undergo rigorous safety testing and are constantly monitored for side effects
- sometimes cause mild side effects that will not last long – some children may feel a bit unwell and have a sore arm for 2 or 3 days
- reduce or even get rid of some diseases – if enough people are vaccinated

Vaccines don't:



- they do not cause autism – studies have found no evidence of a link between the MMR vaccine and autism
- do not overload or weaken the immune system – it's safe to give children several vaccines at a time and this reduces the number of injections they need
- do not cause allergies or any other conditions – all the current evidence tells us that vaccinating is safer than not vaccinating
- do not contain mercury (thiomersal)
- do not contain any ingredients that cause harm in such small amounts – but speak to your doctor if you have any known allergies such as eggs or gelatine

Further Information:

Be aware of anti-vaccine stories:

Anti-vaccine stories are often spread online through social media. They may not be based on scientific evidence and could put your child at risk of a serious illness.

[NHS vaccinations and when to have them - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

NHS information, including vaccine tips for parents: [Why vaccination is safe and important - NHS \(www.nhs.uk\)](https://www.nhs.uk)

This guide has been produced by Education IPC, Public Health and Community Team in Cumbria.
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Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Working for Cumberland Council and
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