

"We urge members of the Church...to protect their own children through immunization. Then they may wish to join other public-spirited citizens in efforts to eradicate ignorance and apathy that have caused the disturbingly low levels of childhood immunization...Every parent who has agonized when these diseases have maimed or brought premature death to their children would join us, we are certain, in a plea to mobilize against these deadly enemies. Immunization is such a simple, yet vital, matter and such a small price to pay for protection against these destroying diseases. ... Immunization campaigns in the United States and other nations, if successful, will end much needless suffering and erase the potential threat of epidemics. Such efforts are deserving of our full support." - **1st Presidency** statement, *Ensign*, July 1978, p. 79.

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Every member should obey the Word of Wisdom and practice sound principles of nutrition, physical fitness, weight control, immunization, environment quality and sanitation, mother and child health, accident prevention, dental health, and medical care. If I didn't run, I would feel tired and run-down after a day's work, and I would never be able to muster the energy I need to accomplish what I want to." Besides getting physical exercise, the Richardsons make sure all family members are properly immunized, and they try to get plenty of sleep each night. [Marvin K. Gardner, "Staying Prepared," *Ensign*, Feb 1979, 24]

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Q. What immunizations should my family have?

A. Immunization programs have done much to reduce communicable disease throughout the world. Poliomyelitis, for example, once a major killer andcrippler in the U.S., is largely prevented today because of regular, scheduled immunizations. Smallpox, a disease dreaded the world over for many centuries, has recently been officially eradicated because of universal immunization.

The Church has encouraged members to obtain immunization against diseases that can be prevented by vaccine inoculations. This not only protects individuals, but such cooperation helps safeguard the health of the entire community.

Diseases against which children should be routinely immunized include diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, polio, measles, rubella (German measles), and mumps. Inoculating children according to the following schedule will provide them with maximum protection against these diseases.

[Utah State Department of Health Schedule for vaccines is omitted here; it lists the DPT and MMR vaccines as remains standard in the US and Canada.]

Parents should keep a careful record of immunizations and check them periodically to ensure that all immunizations are complete.

Other common diseases for which there are vaccines include typhoid, cholera, yellow fever, plague, influenza, viral hepatitis, pneumonia, and tuberculosis. If you live in or travel to areas where these diseases are common you should study carefully local recommendations and follow competent advice regarding immunizations for your family.

["Staying Healthy: Welfare Services Suggests How," *Ensign*, Jan 1981, 10.]

Immunizations—a Reminder

Not too long ago small children were the victims of childhood diseases, the very names of which struck fear into the hearts of parents. Polio, whooping cough, diphtheria, and others maimed or killed thousands of children.

Today, with the use of immunizations, these diseases are becoming more and more uncommon. In fact, they are so uncommon that many parents have become lax about immunizing their children. Some feel that there is no need; others fear adverse side effects. But parents have an obligation to protect their families through immunization.

In 1978 the First Presidency issued a statement in support of immunization programs and urged parents to participate. The statement read in part: "Immunization is such a simple, yet vital, matter and such a small price to pay for protection against ... destroying diseases.

"Failure to act could subject untold thousands to preventable lifelong physical or mental impairment, including paralysis, blindness, deafness, heart damage, and mental retardation.

"We urge members of the Church ... to protect their own children through immunization. Then they may wish to join other public-spirited citizens in efforts to eradicate ignorance and apathy that have caused the disturbingly low levels of childhood immunization." (Reported in *Ensign*, July 1978, p. 79.)

The accompanying immunization schedule can help you ensure that your child is adequately immunized. In following this schedule, it is important that you keep a record of the type of immunization, the date given, and the doctor or clinic that gave the immunization.

Age	Type of Vaccine
2 months	First DTP—diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough) First polio
4 months	Second DTP Second polio
6 months	Third DTP
15 months	MMR—measles, mumps, rubella
18 months and older	Fourth DTP Third polio Fifth DTP Fourth polio
4 to 6 years	TP booster—tetanus, diphtheria. Thereafter every ten years, or following a dirty wound if a booster has not been given in the preceding five years.

[Compiler's note: The Canadian schedule is essentially the same, though the H. influenza serotype b (Hib) vaccine has now been added to the DTP schedule.]

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"Although we live when many diseases can be treated, the best way to remain healthy is to prevent illness and injury. We should get immunizations, have regular health checkups, and use the knowledge the Lord has given us through revelation and scientific discovery. Some families have genetic tendencies toward cancer, heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, and other serious diseases. Members of these families should be especially careful to learn everything they can about ways to prevent these diseases." - *Follow Me: Relief Society Personal Study Guide*, 1989, emphasis added.

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Immunizations Help Prevent Disease

We can protect ourselves and our families from some diseases by getting immunizations. For some diseases we need only one immunization, but for other diseases we may need several immunizations at certain time intervals. Polio is a disease that was once very common. Many years ago a physician-scientist discovered a way to protect people from getting this disease. He developed a polio immunization. People who get the immunization protect themselves from this disease, which once killed many people and crippled many more. In most parts of the world, people can receive immunizations from a health clinic or a physician.

- • What diseases are common in your area? What immunizations do physicians or workers at the health clinic recommend? How often should they be given? What can you do to get the necessary immunizations to protect your family? Tell the sisters when and where immunizations are given. Suggest that the sisters set a time to go get them.
- • Display visual 24-a, "Resistance and Immunity to Disease." Allow the sisters time to study the chart in their manuals.

["Lesson 24: Disease Prevention," *The Latter-day Saint Woman: Basic Manual for Women, Part A* (Revised 2000), 170.]

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Protecting Our Health

Health professionals instruct us that, in addition to developing and practicing good health habits, we should protect ourselves from certain illnesses with immunizations. When we are immunized we usually receive an injection of medicine. For some illnesses we need only one injection; for others we may need several injections of the same medication at different time intervals.

In most parts of the world we can receive immunizations from health clinics or doctors. We can be immunized for such diseases as rubeola (measles), mumps, rubella (German measles), diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), typhoid fever, smallpox, polio, influenza, tetanus, hepatitis A and B, pneumonia, and varicella (chicken pox).

In addition to immunizations, medicines in the form of liquids or pills have been developed to help prevent and cure illnesses. These should be used carefully according to directions from qualified medical professionals. We should not take medication that has expired or has been prescribed for someone else.

Another good way to prevent illness is to have an annual physical examination by a doctor or other health specialist. Early symptoms of illness can be detected in these regular examinations.

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- • Discuss where to find the nearest health facilities and what immunizations are available locally.

["Lesson 24: Maintaining Good Physical Health," *Duties and Blessings of the Priesthood: Basic Manual for Priesthood Holders, Part B*, (Revised 2000), 208.]

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"We recently were applauded in the public press for giving three million dollars to vaccinate children against measles in Africa. This money did not come from tithing. It came from contributions of the faithful to the humanitarian work of the Church. We have joined the American Red Cross, the United Nations Foundation, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the United Nations Children's Fund, the World Health Organization, and the Pan American Health Organization in an effort to immunize 200 million children and prevent 1.2 million deaths from measles over the next five years. Our contribution alone will provide vaccine for three million children. What a marvelous and wonderful thing that is."
" – **President Gordon B. Hinckley**, October Conference 2003, Saturday Morning Session, "The State of the Church".

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"President **Gordon B. Hinckley** praised members of Rotary International on Friday, then pledged \$100,000 to help the humanitarian service group's effort to eradicate polio worldwide. After making the pledge, President Hinckley said the Church wishes to assist the group in its efforts to eradicate polio, an effort he called "a wondrous gift to the human family." See: <http://deseretnews.com/dn/view/0,1249,300006813,00.html?textfield=Church>

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"...there are standard immunizations every potential missionary should obtain. Consult with a doctor regarding the recommended immunizations." [Institute Manual, *Religion 130, Missionary Preparation Student Manual* (2005), 91.]

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Ensign (March 2007): Immunizations. Those preparing to serve missions should obtain all available routine vaccinations and booster injections at appropriate ages. Well before beginning their missionary service, they should also receive any special immunizations required for the particular country where they will serve.

The advantages of immunization overwhelmingly exceed the minuscule risks of receiving vaccines. Immunization renders an individual resistant to disease for varying time periods. Maintaining immunity may require a booster injection. [Donald B. Doty, "Missionary Health Preparation," *Ensign*, Mar 2007, 62–67, emphasis added]