A Healthier Tomorrow Starts Today

Vaccinations and Birth Defects

We want our children to reach their fullest, healthiest potential. Together we can promote healthy pregnancies and lower the risk of birth defects. A healthier tomorrow starts today!



What Are Birth Defects?

- Birth defects are health conditions present when a baby is born.
- They can cause problems with a baby's health, how their body develops, or how their body works.
- They can impact a baby's brain, heart, head, spine, limbs, organs, bones, and cognitive development.

Certain actions taken before and during pregnancy can reduce the risk of birth defects.

Six Tips To Reduce the Risk of Birth Defects



1. Eat a healthy diet and get enough folic acid
2. Connect with prenatal care early and throughout your pregnancy
3. Stay up to date on vaccinations
4. Avoid tobacco, alcohol, and other substance use
5. Get tested for sexually transmitted infections
6. Get help if your basic needs – safety, housing, and food – are not being met

What Are Vaccinations?

- A vaccination is the administration of a vaccine into the body.
- A vaccine has information that your body uses to prepare to face a virus.

Vaccines are one of the most thoroughly tested medical products available in the U.S. A vaccine goes through years of testing, and once in use, continues to be monitored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), U.S Food and Drug Administration (FDA), and independent health organizations.

Why Are Vaccinations Important?



Vaccines can help prevent deadly diseases. When you and your family get vaccinated, you are protected from a serious illness. Getting vaccinated also protects those in the community who can't get vaccinated.

Vaccines are highly effective, safe, and keep you and your family healthy.



Which Vaccinations Should I Get as an Adult?



Adults need vaccinations based on age, job, current health conditions, life-style risks, travel, and vaccination history. Some states require vaccines to attend colleges. Talk to your health care provider about what other vaccines you may need to stay healthy.

Generally, all adults need:

- **Annually:** Flu vaccine, COVID-19 vaccine
- **Once every 10 years or when pregnant:** Tdap booster
- **Healthy adults over 50:** Shingles vaccine
- **Adults over 65**: Pneumococcal vaccine

Side effects are usually mild and brief. If you have had a bad reaction to vaccines in the past, **discuss with your healthcare provider what's best for you.**

Vaccines Before Pregnancy



Vaccinations you get before, during, and after pregnancy help keep you and your baby safe from infection.

Recommended before pregnancy:

- Flu vaccine
- MMR vaccine
- Any other vaccines you may be behind on



Vaccines During Pregnancy

Certain infections and diseases during pregnancy can lead to pregnancy complications and birth defects.

Recommended during pregnancy:

- Flu vaccine – if not received before pregnancy
- COVID-19 vaccine*
- Tdap vaccine - Typically, administered between 27 and 36 weeks gestation

The Tdap vaccine protects both you and your baby against pertussis (also called whooping cough).

Because it spreads easily, it is a good idea for family members and caregivers to receive the Tdap vaccine.

*The Covid-19 vaccines are proven safe for pregnant people and their babies. They give you and your baby's bodies the information they need to prepare to face the COVID-19 virus.



Vaccines After Pregnancy

There are some vaccines that you should not get while pregnant but are safe to get postpartum.

Recommended before or after pregnancy:

- Human papillomavirus (HPV)
- Measles, mumps, rubella (MMR)
- Nasal flu vaccine
- Varicella (chicken pox)
- Certain travel related vaccines



Most insurance plans cover the cost of vaccines.
If you do not have insurance, reach out to Well Badger!

If you are concerned about vaccinations during pregnancy, **talk with your prenatal care provider.** They will have accurate, up-to-date information on the safety of vaccines.

Your provider can help you work through any hesitations or questions you may have. **They are there to help you.**

WELL BADGER RESOURCE CENTER

Steps You Can Take Today

The Well Badger team is here to listen and help - contact them today!

Call
1(800) 642-7837

Text
(608) 360-9328

Email
help@wellbadger.org

Or visit wellbadger.org to chat live or search our online directory of free and low-cost services!

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Learn more about other ways to prevent birth defects at **healthier-tomorrow.org**