

U.S. Child and Adolescent Immunization Schedule



MSD affirms that every child deserves to grow up safe, healthy and able to thrive, and that nothing is more important than the safety of our medicines and vaccines. Childhood vaccination has been remarkably successful, and it is critical that changes to the immunization schedule are informed by comprehensive data, guided by experts and evaluated in the proper context. MSD stands firmly behind an immunization framework grounded in rigorous science, strong regulatory processes and ongoing safety monitoring.

Our Position

At MSD, we share the same fundamental belief with health care providers and parents alike: every child deserves to grow up safe, healthy and able to thrive. Nothing is more important to us than the safety of our medicines and vaccines and the wellbeing of the people who rely on them.

For families today, many infectious diseases may feel like distant history. That progress exists because childhood vaccination has been remarkably successful. Decades of science-based immunization policy, supported by continuous safety monitoring and real-life evidence across millions of children, have helped protect communities.

The U.S. child and adolescent immunization schedule has long reflected this rigorous approach. Vaccines are studied extensively in clinical trials using specific dosing regimens, and vaccinations are timed based on multiple scientific considerations, including when maternal antibodies wane, when children are most likely to be exposed to or susceptible to certain diseases, how immune systems respond at different ages and how healthcare providers can most effectively deliver protection.

As the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) makes changes to the immunization schedule, it is critical that changes are informed by comprehensive data and guided by experts in vaccinology, pediatrics, infectious diseases and epidemiology. International comparisons should also be evaluated in the proper context, recognizing differences in disease burden, healthcare infrastructure and population needs.

Shared clinical decision-making plays an important role in healthcare, helping clinicians and families consider individual circumstances and risks. However, clear, evidence-based recommendations remain essential to support informed decisions and ensure that children and adolescents receive reliable protection against preventable diseases.

As recent outbreaks in the U.S. have shown, sustained confidence in vaccination programs is critical to protecting individuals and communities. When vaccination rates decline, the consequences can be serious.

MSD stands firmly behind an immunization framework grounded in rigorous science, strong regulatory processes and ongoing safety monitoring. We remain committed to working with public health partners to support policies that help protect children and adolescents, strengthen communities and preserve the progress achieved through immunization.