

## The Benefits of Vaccinating Your Child

**Protect your children. Get all their shots on time. The shots are free.  
Call your local public health unit or doctor to make an appointment.**

### Janet and Nathan's story

Janet thought 2½-year-old Nathan was too quiet during a car ride, so she looked in the rearview mirror to check on him. Nathan's eyes were rolling to the back of his head, the entire left side of his body was limp, and he was drooling. Janet rushed Nathan to the hospital. The doctors said Nathan had a stroke and it was likely from having chickenpox six months before. Nathan had not had his shot for chickenpox.

The risk of having a stroke within a year of having the chickenpox is rare, but does happen. A stroke results in brain injury, and about 12 per cent of children who have strokes die. Due to his stroke, Nathan has problems learning, he will have lifelong problems moving his body on the left side, and the muscles in his left arm sometimes jerk out of control.

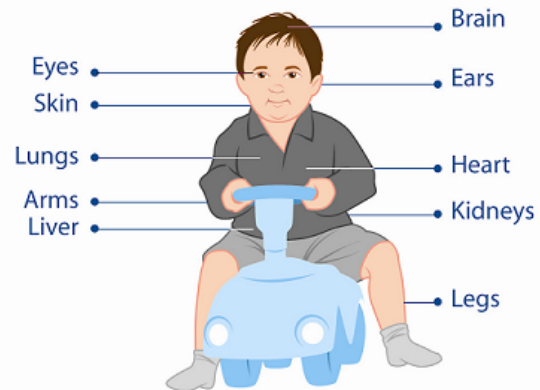
Nathan's injury could have been prevented if he had received the chickenpox vaccine. Vaccines save children from serious illness, injury, and death. Be sure to get all your children their shots on time.

### When you get your child vaccinated, you help protect others as well

It is true. If your child is immune to the disease they cannot get sick and pass the disease onto others who cannot get the shots. Your child's shots will help protect:

- ✓ Your family and neighbours
- ✓ Young babies and older adults
- ✓ People who are sick

### When you get your child vaccinated, you help protect all parts of your child's body



Every disease is able to do harm, sometimes for life. Meningococcal disease, for example, can cause deafness, kidney damage, loss of the use of an arm, hand or leg, and one in 10 people can die. Vaccines prevent diseases from doing harm.

### When you get your child vaccinated, you help protect your child now and in the future

What places will your child visit in 5, 10 or 20 years? Check the list below:

- Daycare or preschool
- School – Kindergarten to Grade 12
- College or university
- Waiting room at a doctor's office
- An airplane or bus
- Summer camp,
- Community centre, concert or event

These are all crowded places where germs are spread easily. Vaccinating your child now ensures a healthier future.

**Keep your child safe.  
Get all their shots on time.**

By getting shots on time, your child can be protected from many diseases over a lifetime. Remember for best protection, it is important that all shots are given on time.

## Shots are very safe

It is safer to get shots than to get sick. Here are things you should know:

- The most common side effect is a sore arm or leg where the shot is given, and a low fever. Up to half of people experience this after getting a shot.
- An allergic reaction after getting a shot is rare – only a one in a million chance. If this happens, there are treatments.
- One serious side effect is a seizure (convulsion), often from fever. These seizures are rare and do not do any harm.
- More serious side effects are very rare.

Diseases in Canada:	before shots existed*	after shots existed*
Diphtheria	9,000	1
Measles	300,000	8
Polio	20,000	0
Rubella	69,000	9
Pertussis	25,000	2,718
	*people sick in one year	*people sick in 2004

**Shots have kept thousands of people from getting diseases.** This chart lists diseases your child can be protected from. See how many Canadians get sick now, compared to before shots existed.

For more details, see the Canadian Immunization Guide at [www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/vaccine\\_e.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/publicat/cig-gci/vaccine_e.html)

## What happens if I do not get my child's shots?

Shots work very well if most parents choose shots. But, at times around the world large groups of parents have chosen not to get their children vaccinated. When this happens, the diseases come back quickly

and lots of children get sick and some die. This has happened in Canada, England, Sweden, Japan and other countries. Get all your child's shots. Get them on time.

## For more information

Public Health Agency of Canada:  
[www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/index.html](http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca/im/index.html)

The Children's Hospital of Philadelphia:  
[www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/microsite/microsite.jsp?id=75918](http://www.chop.edu/consumer/jsp/microsite/microsite.jsp?id=75918)

Canadian Paediatric Society:  
[www.caringforkids.cps.ca/](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/)

## More BC HealthFiles on childhood immunization:

[#50a Your Baby's Immune System and Vaccines](#)

[#50c Childhood Vaccines are Safe](#)

[#50d Childhood Vaccines: What is in the Vaccines and Why](#)

[#50e Getting Ready for Your Child's Shots](#)

[#50f Childhood Vaccines: Questions and Answers](#)

For more BC HealthFile topics visit [www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/index.stm](http://www.bchealthguide.org/healthfiles/index.stm), or visit your local public health unit.

**Call the BC NurseLine to speak to a registered nurse, available 24-hours every day:**

- In Greater Vancouver, call 604-215-4700
- In BC, call toll-free 1-866-215-4700
- Deaf and hearing-impaired, call 1-866-889-4700
- Pharmacist available 5pm to 9am every day
- Translation services in over 130 languages upon request.

**Visit BC HealthGuide OnLine – a world of health information you can trust at**

[www.bchealthguide.org](http://www.bchealthguide.org)



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