

Polio Vaccine (IPV)

Immunization protects you from disease. Get protected, get immunized.

- Vaccines make your immune system stronger. They build antibodies to help prevent diseases.
- Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get this disease.

What is the polio vaccine?

The polio vaccine protects against the polio virus. The polio vaccine you get by an injection (needle) is called IPV.

Who should get the polio vaccine?

Your child can get the polio vaccine in school, up to the end of grade 12. They may get this vaccine if they have already been immunized for diphtheria, tetanus, and pertussis and only need a polio vaccine.

You may also get the vaccine if you are at risk for polio because of:

- travel to an area that has a high risk of polio
- your work (like some healthcare or lab work)

How many doses do I need?

You get at least 3 doses of a polio vaccine the first time you are immunized for polio. This is called the primary series. You usually get this series as a baby in vaccines that protect against other diseases.

After the primary series, you need an extra (booster) dose at age 4 years to keep you protected.

Adults who are at risk for polio may need a booster dose. You must wait at least 10 years after getting your childhood immunizations (primary series) for polio before getting this booster.

Are there other vaccines that protect against polio?

Yes, the vaccines **dTap-IPV**, **DTaP-IPV-Hib**, and **DTaP-IPV-Hib-HB** all protect against polio.

- **dTap-IPV** protects against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), and polio. It is most often used as a booster dose for children who are age 4 years.
- **DTaP-IPV-Hib** protects against all of the same diseases as dTap-IPV as well as *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib). Children born before March 1, 2018, who are under age 7 years get this vaccine as part of their primary series. Children also get this vaccine as a booster dose when they are 18 months old.
- **DTaP-IPV-Hib-HB** protects against all of the same diseases as DTaP-IPV-Hib as well as hepatitis B. It is a vaccine that babies get if they are born on or after March 1, 2018.

The type of polio vaccine you get depends on your age and if you need protection from other diseases (like diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib), or hepatitis B).

How well does the vaccine work?

After the primary series, the protection for polio is over 95%. After a booster dose, the protection is almost 100%.

Where can I get the polio vaccine?

If you need the vaccine because of your work (such as some types of healthcare or lab work), talk to your workplace health and safety department.

If you are travelling to an area that has a high risk of polio, contact a travel health clinic or talk to your doctor or pharmacist.

You can also contact the public health office in your area to get the vaccine.

Are there side effects from the polio vaccine?

There can be side effects from the polio vaccine, but they tend to be mild and go away in a few days. Side effects may include:

- redness or feeling sore where you had the needle
- a fever

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after your vaccine. Some people may have a rare but serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. If anaphylaxis happens, you will get medicine to treat the symptoms.

It is rare to have a serious side effect after a vaccine. Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

How can I manage side effects?

- To help with soreness and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area where you had the needle.
- There is medicine to help with a fever or pain. Check with your doctor or pharmacist if you are not sure what medicine or dose to take. Follow the directions on the package.
- Children under the age of 18 years should **not** take aspirin because it can cause serious health problems.
- Some people with health problems, such as a weak immune system, must call their doctor if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your doctor even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

Who should not get the polio vaccine?

You may not be able to get this vaccine if you:

- have an allergy to any part of the vaccine
- had a severe (serious) or unusual side effect after this vaccine or one like it

You can still get the vaccine if you have a mild illness such as a cold or fever. Always tell your healthcare provider if you have allergies or if you have had a side effect from a vaccine in the past.

Check with your doctor or a public health nurse before you get the vaccine.

For More Information



Call Health Link at **811**



Go to [ImmunizeAlberta.ca](https://www.immunizealberta.ca)



Go to [MyHealth.Alberta.ca](https://www.myhealth.alberta.ca)

Facts about polio

What is polio?

Polio is an infection of the nervous system (brain, spinal cord, and nerves) caused by a virus. Most people who get infected with polio do not have symptoms but can still spread the disease. Some people have mild flu-like symptoms. In rare cases, polio can lead to paralysis (not being able to move a part of your body) and death.

Who is most at risk?

Those most at risk of polio are:

- children who have not had a polio vaccine
- travellers going to areas that have a high risk of polio
- adults who have contact with the polio virus through their work (such as some healthcare workers and lab workers)

How does it spread?

Polio spreads through stool (poop) infected with the polio virus. The infected stool can get onto your hands or into your food and water, and then into your mouth.