

# VACCINE FAQ

*Note, this FAQ is intended as a general information resource on vaccine administration. It is not intended to address specific investigations or legal proceedings.*

- **What are examples of information physicians consider when recommending vaccines?**

- Physicians may consider:<sup>1,2</sup>
  - » **Patient health history**, including vaccination history, medical conditions, immunocompromised status, age, and whether pregnant or lactating.
  - » **Risk factors**, including occupation, travel, sexual activity, and environment such as the status of current outbreaks.
  - » **Vaccine-specific data**, such as its effectiveness, safety, and whether there are any medical contraindications.
  - » **Patient preference** in making a shared clinical decision about vaccines.
  - » **Evidence-based immunization schedules** and recommendations from medical and public health professional organizations.
- Routine vaccination is a common part of preventive care to prevent illness, along with services like annual well-visits, blood pressure and cholesterol checks, and more.<sup>3,4</sup>

- **How can childhood vaccines improve population health?**

- Vaccines can help prevent infection and outbreaks, reduce the severity of illness, and reduce the risk of hospitalization and death from vaccine-preventable diseases.<sup>5</sup>
- Childhood vaccines are one part of preventive health, like a nutritious diet and exercise, that helps give children a healthy start in life.<sup>6</sup>
- Vaccines often provide stronger, safer immunity against illnesses than infection-derived immunity, as it does not require having to fight off an illness that may have longer-lasting health effects.<sup>7</sup>
- The higher the vaccination rates in a community, the lower the risk of an outbreak, protecting

people who cannot get vaccines or are at high risk for disease complications, such as:<sup>8</sup>

- » Babies too young to receive vaccines;
- » Pregnant women;
- » Older adults; and
- » Individuals with weakened immune systems, chronic illness, or cancer.

- **Do physicians make money from administering vaccines?**

- Physicians often lose money or break even when administering vaccines, from costs for storage, liability insurance, inventory management, and staff time.<sup>9</sup>
- Reimbursement for vaccines often fails to cover the full cost, with the lowest reimbursement rates being from Medicaid and safety net programs.<sup>10,11</sup>
- A recent study found that physicians do not receive a bonus per vaccine given, and pharmaceutical companies do not pay physicians to vaccinate patients.<sup>12</sup>

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