

**When you talk to clients,
it's important to be clear
and know the facts.**



Sharing accurate scientific information can build your clients' trust and let them know that vaccines are safe and effective.

**Here's what
CHWs should
know about
vaccines.**



Here are some facts about vaccines.



Vaccines are **carefully tested** before they are made available. Even after they have been approved, they are still regularly monitored for safety.



Vaccines **save lives** by preventing illness, disability and death. Vaccines are our best defense against illnesses like polio, measles, COVID-19 and many others.



If you do get sick, being vaccinated **lowers the risk** of your illness becoming dangerous or deadly.



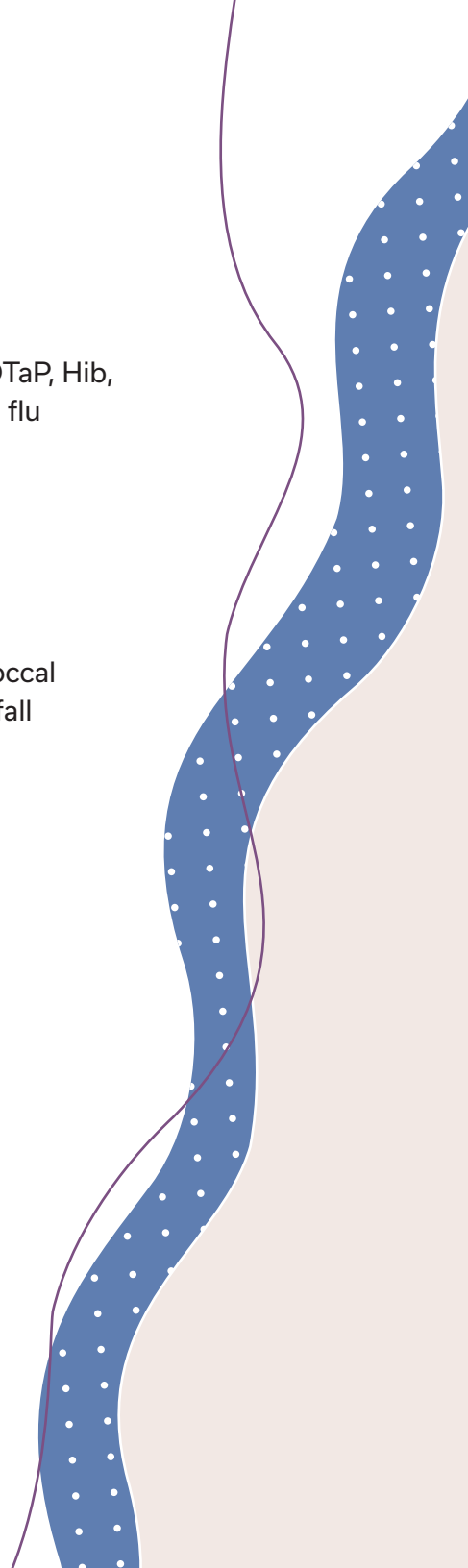
Vaccines **help your body recognize** and fight infections. They also prevent the spread of disease in your community.



Here are common vaccines and when they're recommended.

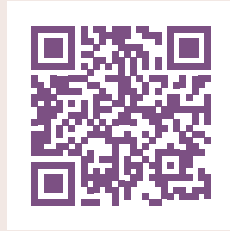
- **FOR INFANTS BIRTH TO 12 MONTHS:**
Hepatitis B at birth, RSV, rotavirus, DTaP, Hib, pneumococcal, polio, COVID-19 and flu
- **FOR CHILDREN AGED 1-8:**
Additional doses of some of the infant vaccines, plus hepatitis A, MMR, chickenpox and flu
- **FOR CHILDREN AGED 9-18:**
HPV at 9 years, Tdap and meningococcal at 11 years, flu and COVID-19 every fall
- **FOR ADULTS:**
Flu, COVID-19, shingles, RSV, pneumococcal and Tdap boosters
- **PREGNANCY-RELATED VACCINES:**
Tdap, flu, COVID-19 and RSV vaccines are recommended during pregnancy to protect both parent and baby

Each vaccine is different. Clients, especially those with weakened immune systems, should consult their providers about which ones they may need. Most pharmacies, community clinics or health departments offer vaccine appointments.



Learn more

Scan the QR code, then click the **Tip Sheets** button for more resources and links.



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When you have conversations with clients about vaccines, your tone and attitude are important.



Here's how you can have productive discussions and put them at ease.

It's OK to have questions about vaccines.



There is a lot of false or misleading information about vaccines, and clients may share concerns, doubts and strong opinions about them. No matter how you or your clients may feel, you can lead a respectful, meaningful conversation about the importance of vaccines.

- **Ask if you can share vaccine information.**
- **Stay calm, respectful and polite.**
- **Listen first. Respond thoughtfully.**
- **Ask what questions they have.**
- **Keep an even tone.**
- **Acknowledge their feelings.**
- **Be gentle and encouraging.**



Be curious and don't assume. Ask them open-ended questions to understand their feelings and values.

FOR EXAMPLE

“Can you tell me what you have heard about vaccines? What questions do you have about vaccines for your family?”

Acknowledge their concerns and avoid judgement.

FOR EXAMPLE

“You are not alone in having questions about vaccines. We all want to keep our loved ones safe and healthy, and there is conflicting and confusing information on the internet and social media.”

Focus on the personal benefits of vaccines.

FOR EXAMPLE

“I can tell you are concerned about your family's health. Vaccines can keep you and them from getting sick.”

Keep it simple and friendly, but also let them know you are a reliable source of information.

FOR EXAMPLE

“Can I share with you what I've learned about how vaccines protect you and your loved ones?”

Offer resources and support.

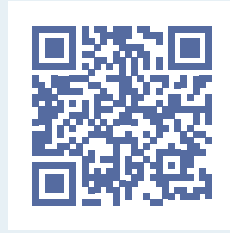
FOR EXAMPLE

“If you are interested, I can share information that may answer some of your questions about vaccines. I am also available to continue this conversation if you ever want to talk more.”



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When clients come to you with concerns about vaccines, you can respond in ways that are friendly, supportive and factual.



Your responses can start a productive conversation that makes your client **more confident** about getting vaccinated.

I can address your concerns.



Here are some common client concerns.

Adapt these responses so they feel authentic to you. Be compassionate and curious, but also lead with facts.

“I read online that vaccines cause autism.”

Vaccines do not cause autism. This has been studied by scientists for years. Genes and environmental factors can cause autism. Vaccines do not affect genes.

“I heard you get sick after getting vaccinated.”

Some people feel soreness in the arm where they were vaccinated. You may feel tired and slightly feverish for a day. More serious side effects are extremely rare.

“I don't have insurance and vaccines are expensive.”

Most vaccines are free or low-cost. In Washington, children under 19 can get vaccinated for free. There's also a program providing low-cost vaccines for uninsured adults 19 and over.

“I am afraid to get vaccinated because of my immigration status.”

You do not need to share your immigration status with anyone to get vaccinated.



“I’ve already had COVID, and I feel fine.”

Anyone can get COVID-19 more than once, which can cause long-lasting symptoms or increase risks like heart problems. Even healthy people should get vaccinated to protect against serious diseases.

“Doctors only want me to get vaccinated because they profit from it.”

Doctors and scientists recommend vaccines to protect people. They do not profit from them.

“I already got that vaccine. Why do I need to get it again?”

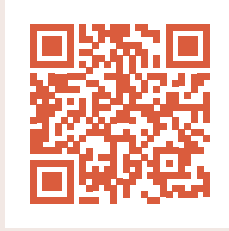
Viruses change and vaccines are updated to better protect against them. Your provider may also recommend getting vaccinated again for longer-lasting protection.

“The leader at my church said I shouldn’t get vaccinated.”

Almost all religions allow or encourage people to get vaccinated. It might be helpful to share facts with your church leader. I can share more info with you.

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**You can promote health
in ways that respect your
clients' cultures.**



You can inform clients that vaccines protect against severe illness while also supporting their decisions. Continue having vaccine conversations to better understand their views.

**Along with
vaccines, these
habits can keep
you healthy.**



You may have clients who do not want to get vaccinated. As a CHW, you can continue to promote the science of vaccines while respecting their choices. These are everyday health tips that can keep your clients, their loved ones and their communities healthy.

If you get sick:

- Remember that young children, infants, older people and people with chronic health conditions are **at higher risk** of the harmful effects of many illnesses.
- **Stay home** if you can, and avoid crowded indoor spaces.
- **Cover your mouth** with your elbow or a tissue when you cough and sneeze.
- **Wear an N95** mask to prevent the spread of respiratory viruses that cause diseases like COVID-19 and the flu.
- **Wash your hands** often.
- If you test positive for COVID-19, antiviral treatments like Paxlovid can help you **recover faster and prevent serious illness**.



Keep yourself from getting sick.

- Keep a healthy and balanced diet, stay active and get a lot of sleep to **boost your immune system**.
- Stay up to date on general **health appointments and screenings**. See your provider at least once a year. Regular check-ups can keep you healthy and reduce your risk of getting sick.
- **Wash your hands** after using the bathroom, before eating and before touching your face.

Vaccines are the most effective way to prevent many illnesses.

- Getting vaccinated can **protect you** from several deadly diseases.
- Science-based information shows that **vaccines have saved lives** and prevented illnesses and suffering. Vaccines have made diseases like polio and measles much less common and have lowered the risk of lifelong disabilities.



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