A guide to
childhood immunisations
for babies up to 13 months of age
'The two public health interventions that have had the greatest impact on the world’s health are clean water and vaccines.'

World Health Organization
This guide describes all the routine childhood immunisations for babies up to 13 months of age.

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Routine childhood immunisation programme – a quick reference guide to your child's immunisations.
Summary

Immunisation is the safest and most effective way of protecting your baby against serious diseases. By having your baby immunised at the recommended times, you are protecting them through early childhood against:

- diphtheria
- tetanus
- whooping cough (pertussis)
- Hib (*Haemophilus influenzae* type b)
- polio
- meningitis C (meningococcal group C)
- pneumococcal infection
- measles
- mumps, and
- rubella (German measles).

These diseases can be very serious. Immunising your child not only protects them, it also prevents the diseases spreading and protects other children who cannot be immunised because they have serious medical conditions.
The complete routine childhood immunisation programme is given on the back cover.

There is more detailed information on all the vaccines at www.immunisation.nhs.uk

Or, talk to your doctor, practice nurse or health visitor. You can also call NHS Direct on 0845 4647.
Common questions about immunisation
What is immunisation?

Immunisation is a way of protecting against serious diseases. Once we have been immunised, our bodies are better able to fight those diseases if we come into contact with them.

How do vaccines work?

Vaccines contain a small part of the bacterium or virus that causes a disease, or tiny amounts of the chemicals that the bacterium produces. Vaccines work by causing the body’s immune system to make antibodies (substances that fight off infection and disease). If your child comes into contact with the infection, the antibodies will recognise it and be ready to protect him or her. Because vaccines have been used so successfully in the UK, diseases such as diphtheria have almost disappeared from this country.

There are some diseases that can kill children or cause lasting damage to their health. Immunisations are given to prepare your child’s immune system to fight off those diseases if they come into contact with them.

When should my baby be immunised?

It is important that your baby has their immunisations at the right age – the first ones are given at two months old. They will be given further doses of these immunisations when they are three months old and four months old. Other immunisations are given at around 12 months and 13 months of age, then between three and five years of age (before your child starts school), and in their teenage years (see the table on the back cover of this leaflet).