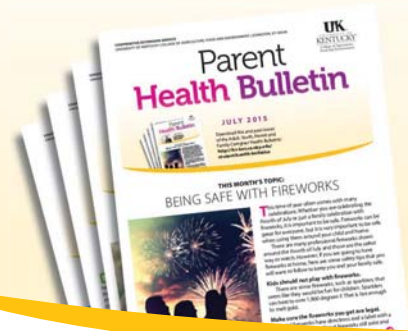


Parent Health Bulletin



AUGUST 2015

Download this and past issues of the Adult, Youth, Parent and Family Caregiver Health Bulletins:
<http://fcs-hes.ca.uky.edu/content/health-bulletins>

Reprinted by:
K-State Research & Extension
Atchison County Office
405 Main/PO Box 109
Effingham, KS 66023
913-833-5450

THIS MONTH'S TOPIC: IMMUNIZATIONS

Making sure your child is up-to-date on immunizations (commonly called shots) is important. Most likely, you have had to turn in an immunization record to your child's school. Perhaps you have even had to give a copy of the immunization record to a special program or camp.

It is very important that your child gets all needed immunizations. Each immunization helps protect your child from illnesses. Sometime more than one dose of the shot will need to be given for the best protection. Having an immunization record can help you see which immunizations may be needed. If you have questions about your child's immunizations, talk to your healthcare provider.

Although you probably know how important immunizations are, it can be hard when it is time for your child to have a shot. Talking to her about the immunization is important. It is not a good idea to surprise her with the need for an immunization.



Continued on the back →



If you have questions about your child's immunizations, talk to your healthcare provider.

Continued from page 1

Here are a few things that you may want to talk with your child about before he has to get the next immunization.

- **Explain how immunizations work.**

Immunizations help keep your child from getting sick because they give her a little of the germ or a germ that is already dead or very weak. This little germ helps the body create antibodies. Antibodies are part of the immune system and help fight off the disease or illness. Remind your child, there are times when she will get an immunization and still may get a mild illness, but most of the time the immunization will keep her from getting sick at all.

It is very important that your child gets all needed immunizations.

Each immunization helps protect your child from illnesses.

- **Be honest — the immunization may hurt a little.** Tell your child that the immunization may pinch or sting. But it will only last a few seconds. Older brothers or sisters can help by saying that they got the immunization and they are OK. Other family members can also talk about immunizations in a positive manner.
- **Avoid scary stories about immunizations.** Although you want to talk about getting immunizations, it is a good idea not to tell scary stories about getting them.
- **Allow your child to bring a favorite book or tell a story.** Allowing your child to bring along a book or telling your child a story can be a good distraction when it is time to get the immunization.
- **Take deep breaths with your child.** “Blowing air” out of the mouth can help with the pinch



or the sting your child may feel. By looking at your child, counting together and “blowing out” when the immunization is given can help.

- **Offer lots of praise.** Once the immunization has been given, tell your child how proud you are of him. Give a high-five or a big hug, or both!
- **Comfort your child if he or she cries.** Immunizations can sting. If your child cries, do not yell at her or get upset. Don't say that she is “not brave.” Tell your child that it is OK and that you know that it pinched. Hold and hug your child and say “it is going to be OK.”

Immunizations are a very important part of staying healthy. Talking to your child about immunizations lessens the chance that he will be fearful of them and can make the experience better for both of you.

SOURCES:

- Nemours KidsHealth (2014). A kid's guide to shots. http://kidshealth.org/kid/feel_better/things/guide_shots.html#
- HealthFinder (2015). Get your child's shots on schedule. www.Healthfinder.gov

Parent
Health Bulletin

Written by: Nicole Peritore
Edited by: Connee Wheeler
Designed by: Rusty Manseau
Stock images: 123RF.com

