

OH NO...It is Time for Immunizations!

by Debbie A. Nicholls

First of all, parents you need to relax. Get used to shots for your children. This is one of the easier tasks, (of the billion you will perform), to protect your child. Seriously, you need to keep your child current on their vaccines. As a new parent, you need to know that infants are born with antibodies that their mothers passed to them through the placenta. This protects them from certain diseases. Breastfed babies get a continued dose of antibodies with their breast milk. This protection is temporary, thus the need for immunizations.

Please refer to: www.dshs.state.tx.us/immuniza/school/ for schedules of what vaccinations your child requires and at what age. Always speak with your physician and let him determine the best vaccinations and schedule for your child.

If your child needs comforting during shots, try holding them on your lap. An infant/toddler can suck on their pacifier. Distract your child with a book, toy or sing a silly song. DO NOT let your child feel your anxiety. That will make them anxious as well. I think it is harder on the parent watching their child get a shot, than it is on the child getting the immunization. Don't worry parents, it just takes a couple of minutes and your child will be ready to play again.

If your child is 6 months or older, you may give your child ibuprofen to help with the pain. It is advised not to give acetaminophen because it can make the immunization less effective.

PRAISE your child after the immunizations. This will make the next trip to the physician a little easier. You could also do something fun afterwards, like a trip to the park or out to eat.

Some parents worry that their child will have serious reactions or even get the illness the vaccine is supposed to prevent. Vaccines are unlikely to cause any serious illness due to the components of the vaccine are weakened or killed. In some cases, only parts of the microorganisms are used.

Immunizations are one of the best means of protection against contagious diseases. Take the time to protect your child and get their vaccinations!

Parenting never gets easy, if you do it right. We worry about everything when it comes to "the love of our lives." Providing immunizations for your child is just another way to say you love them.