



FACILITATING VACCINATION in your practice

Unsubstantiated or inaccurate information about the importance of vaccinations can keep parents on the fence as to whether they have their child(ren) vaccinated on schedule as recommended by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). Parents who question vaccine safety and efficacy often seek advice from their healthcare providers, and many ultimately decide to vaccinate. For vaccine-hesitant parents, the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that providers first understand and acknowledge parental concerns in a nonconfrontational manner, and then clarify and reaffirm parents' correct beliefs and address misconceptions about immunization.

These Frequently Asked Questions cards are designed to be used during your conversations with parents to help facilitate a dialogue about the importance of vaccination. They include some of the more common concerns that you may hear from parents about their child's CDC-recommended vaccinations and provide proposed responses that can help address them. You can use this conversation tool as part of a broader strategy towards vaccine advocacy in your practice, including the following tips:

- **Make strong, confident recommendations**
 - Remember, your judgment is a very influential factor for the majority of families
- **Utilize a presumptive approach ("We will be giving the following vaccines today") rather than a participatory approach ("Do you want your child to get his vaccines today?")**
 - Parents are less likely to resist vaccination when it is presented as the presumed course of action
- **Get everyone in the office on board**
 - Physicians, nurses, and office personnel should all reinforce the vaccination message
- **Be empathetic, but project calm resolve**
 - Your wisdom holds weight—empathy can lead to parental acceptance and commitment
- **Target your responses to the person in front of you**
 - Keep in mind the parents' educational level, cultural and religious background, and other factors that may influence their decision-making
- **Make it personal**
 - Tell parents why your own children are vaccinated and why you yourself are vaccinated
- **Avoid the tendency to be dismissive**
 - Acknowledge parents' concerns—and steer the conversation back to the importance and efficacy of CDC-recommended vaccinations
- **If parents bring up concerns or push back—focus on the facts**
 - Pepper the conversation with key facts

Frequently Asked Questions Cards Overview

In your well-baby visits with parents and their children, you may be asked questions such as those that follow. Responses suggested on the cards can help facilitate a dialogue with parents who are apprehensive or resistant to vaccination.

Is it safe to get so many vaccines at once?

Are shots harmful for my baby?

Is it more painful to receive multiple shots at once?

Is it better to use an “alternative” schedule?

Is natural immunity the same as vaccine-induced immunity?

Do vaccines cause autism?

Are shots very painful for my baby?

Do some religious organizations oppose vaccination?

Is it safe for my child to receive a vaccination when sick?

How are vaccines tested for safety?

What are the most common side effects of vaccines?

Will the vaccine give someone the disease it’s supposed to prevent?