

When there is vaccine-preventable disease in your community:

- It may not be too late to get protection by getting vaccinated. Ask your child's doctor.
- If there are cases (or, in some circumstances, a single case) of a vaccine-preventable disease in your community, you may be asked to take your child out of school, childcare, or organized activities (for example, playgroups or sports).
- Your school, childcare facility, or other institution will tell you when it is safe for an unvaccinated child to return. Be prepared to keep your child home for several days up to several weeks.
- Learn about the disease and how it is spread. It may not be possible to avoid exposure. For example, measles is so contagious that hours after an infected person has left the room, an unvaccinated person can get measles just by entering that room.
- Each disease is different, and the time between when your child might have been exposed to a disease and when he or she may get sick will vary. Talk with your child's doctor or the health department to get their guidelines for determining when your child is no longer at risk of coming down with the disease.

Be aware.

- Any vaccine-preventable disease can strike at any time in the U.S. because all of these diseases still circulate either in the U.S. or elsewhere in the world.
- Sometimes vaccine-preventable diseases cause outbreaks, that is, clusters of cases in a given area.
- Some of the vaccine-preventable diseases that still circulate in the U.S. include whooping cough, chickenpox, Hib (a cause of meningitis), and influenza. These diseases, as well as the other vaccine-preventable diseases, can range from mild to severe and life-threatening. In most cases, there is no way to know beforehand if a child will get a mild or serious case.
- For some diseases, one case is enough to cause concern in a community. An example is measles, which is one of the most contagious diseases known. This disease spreads quickly among people who are not immune.

If you know your child is exposed to a vaccine-preventable disease for which he or she has not been vaccinated:

- Learn the early signs and symptoms of the disease.
- Seek immediate medical help if your child or any family members develop early signs or symptoms of the disease.

IMPORTANT: Notify the doctor's office, urgent care facility, ambulance personnel, or emergency room staff that your child has not been fully vaccinated before medical staff have contact with your child or your family members. They need to know that your child may have a vaccine-preventable disease so that they can treat your child correctly as quickly as possible. Medical staff also can take simple precautions to prevent diseases from spreading to others if they know ahead of time that their patient may have a contagious disease.

- Follow recommendations to isolate your child from others, including family members, and especially infants and people with weakened immune systems. Most vaccine-preventable diseases can be very dangerous to infants who are too young to be fully vaccinated, or children who are not vaccinated due to certain medical conditions.
- Be aware that for some vaccine-preventable diseases, there are medicines to treat infected people and medicines to keep people they come in contact with from getting the disease.
- Ask your healthcare provider about other ways to protect your family members and anyone else who may come into contact with your child.
- Your family may be contacted by the state or local health department who track infectious disease outbreaks in the community.

If you travel with your child:

- Review the CDC travelers' information website (www.cdc.gov/travel) before traveling to learn about possible disease risks and vaccines that will protect your family. Diseases that vaccines prevent remain common throughout the world, including Europe.
- Don't spread disease to others. If an unimmunized person develops a vaccine-preventable disease while traveling, to prevent transmission to others, he or she should not travel by a plane, train, or bus until a doctor determines the person is no longer contagious.