

# 5 Thing to Know About Pediatric Immunisations

While routine pediatric immunisations are one of the most effective ways to help protect children and communities<sup>i</sup>, European countries are currently facing some of lowest rates of vaccine confidence and adherence in the world.<sup>ii</sup> While there is a lot to know about pediatric immunisation, here are five facts to keep in mind when considering immunisations for your child.

1

## Immunisations for children are carefully evaluated for safety and potential side effects.

The European Medicines Agency has a long-standing vaccine safety system. Vaccines are carefully reviewed during development, when being approved, and after they are available to the public.<sup>iii</sup> Vaccine side effects are continually monitored by analysing many sources of data, like reports from parents and healthcare professionals.<sup>iii</sup> It's important to vaccinate your child to help prevent disease outbreaks that can put children and families at risk.<sup>iv</sup>

2

## Immunisations do not cause autism in children.

This is a common misconception. After years of thorough review of scientific evidence, it is clear that there is no link between a child receiving vaccines and developing autism spectrum disorder.<sup>v</sup>

3

## Multiple immunisations are needed to help protect children.

Routine immunisations can help protect your children from serious illness.<sup>vi</sup> Depending on the vaccine, your child may need more than one dose to build immunity or boost immunity that may wane over time.<sup>vi</sup>

4

## Immunisations can have some side effects.

Immunisations can have some side effects, such as soreness in the injection site, fussiness, or a low-grade fever, and often go away within a few days.<sup>vi</sup> Serious reactions are rare, and most side effects are minor and temporary.<sup>iv</sup> If your child does experience any reactions that concern you, please contact your child's pediatrician.

5

## Immunisations help protect your child, your family and your community.

Routine immunisations can help protect your family and your whole community through "community immunity."<sup>vi</sup> When enough people are immunized, it's harder for disease to spread from person to person, especially to those who cannot receive immunisations due to a weakened immune system and those who are too young to be vaccinated.<sup>vi</sup>

**This material was developed in collaboration between the Excellence in Pediatrics Institute and Pfizer.**

In October 2022, in response to recent trends of declining pediatric vaccination rates across Europe, the Excellence in Pediatrics Institute, with support from Pfizer, conducted an online survey of pediatric healthcare providers (HCPs) and civic, advocacy and HCP stakeholder organisations, that aimed to uncover barriers and potential solutions to better prioritise routine pediatric immunisation in Europe. Among key findings from the survey, 51% of respondents believe that "concerns about vaccine safety and adverse events" is a top challenge for parents to get their children vaccinated. Respondents felt the messages about vaccine safety would be most effective in encouraging parents to act on pediatric vaccination. Excellence in Pediatrics Institute and Pfizer are working together to apply these findings to develop new resources and encourage more conversations about routine pediatric immunisation between parents and HCPs.



i UNICEF. Vaccines are the safest way to protect your child's health throughout life. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/northmacedonia/vaccines-are-safest-way-protect-childs-health-throughout-life>. Accessed January 2023.

ii European Commission. State of Health in the EU Companion Report 2019. Available at: [https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2019-11/2019\\_companion\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://health.ec.europa.eu/system/files/2019-11/2019_companion_en_0.pdf). Published October 2019. Accessed September 2022.

iii European Vaccination Information Portal. Monitoring vaccine safety and reporting side effects. Available at: <https://vaccination-info.eu/en/vaccine-facts/monitoring-vaccine-safety-and-reporting-side-effects>.

vaccine-safety-and-reporting-side-effects. Published March 2022. Accessed November 2022.

iv World Health Organization. Vaccines and immunization: Myths and misconceptions. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/questions-and-answers/item/vaccines-and-immunization-myths-and-misconceptions>. Published October 2020. Accessed November 2022.

v World Health Organization. Autism. Available at: <https://www.who.int/news-room/fact-sheets/detail/autism-spectrum-disorders>. Published March 2022. Accessed November 2022.

vi UNICEF. Vaccines for children: Your questions answered. Available at: <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/health/parents-frequently-asked-questions-vaccines>. Accessed November 2022.