

History of Vaccines Timeline



VaccinateYourBaby.org

Due to systematic vaccination programs, smallpox has been eliminated worldwide, and cases of polio, measles, diphtheria and Hib are at all-time lows. Read below about the history of vaccines and how they keep you and your children safe.

1950s - 1960s

1955

Dr. Jonas Salk's inactivated polio vaccine is licensed, beginning the decline of polio worldwide.

1959

World Health Assembly passes the initial resolution calling for global smallpox eradication and proposes a worldwide vaccination campaign.

1961

Monovalent oral polio vaccine licensed, producing longer lasting immunity than the original vaccine.

1963

Introduction of the trivalent (meaning it is made of three strains of virus) oral polio vaccine created by Dr. Albert Sabin.

The first measles vaccine is licensed.

1964

The Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP) holds its first meeting. ACIP was created to provide CDC with advice on vaccine use and disease prevention.

1964-1965

20,000 cases of Congenital Rubella Syndrome – which occurs in an infant when the virus is contracted in the womb -- occurred during the largest rubella epidemic in the United States.

1970s

1971

Routine smallpox vaccination ceases in the United States.

The MMR vaccine, which provides protection from measles, mumps and rubella, is licensed.

1976

The largest public vaccination program in the United States to date -- conducted against Swine Flu – is halted by association with Guillain-Barre syndrome.

1977

The last indigenous case of smallpox occurs in Somalia.

1979

The last reported case of natural polio is acquired in the United States.

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1980s

India begins a polio eradication program.

1980

Global eradication of smallpox is certified by the Global Health Assembly.

1982

Hepatitis B vaccine becomes available.

1986

The National Childhood Vaccine Injury Act establishes a no-fault compensation system for those injured by vaccines and requires adverse health events following specific vaccinations be reported and those injured by vaccines be compensated.

1988

The Worldwide Polio Eradication Initiative is launched; supported by WHO, UNICEF, Rotary International, CDC, national governments and others. With the cooperation of more than 200 countries, the initiative has vaccinated more than 2 billion children.

1989-1991

Major resurgence of measles in the United States—55,000 cases compared with a low of 1,497 cases in 1983. Two-dose measles vaccine (MMR) is recommended.

1990s

1990

Co-sponsored by the FDA and CDC, the Vaccine Adverse Reporting System (VAERS) monitoring the safety of vaccines, is established.

Haemophilus influenzae type B (Hib) polysaccharide conjugate vaccine licensed for infants. Before the vaccine was introduced, Hib was the leading cause of bacterial meningitis in children under 5 years old.

1991

Hepatitis B vaccine recommended for all infants, since infants and children are at increased risk for developing chronic liver disease or cancer from the disease.

1994

Polio elimination certified in the 36 countries that make up the World Health Organization Region of the Americas.

The Vaccines for Children (VFC) program is established to provide free vaccines to eligible children.

1995

The first childhood immunization schedule endorsed by ACIP, the American Academy of Family Physicians and the American Academy of Pediatrics, is published.

Varicella vaccine is licensed. Before the vaccine was available, varicella was a common childhood ailment, sickening an estimated 4 million each year in the United States.

Hepatitis A vaccine licensed. The rate of hepatitis A has declined 89 percent since 1995.

1996

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Acellular pertussis vaccine – a newer, even safer version of the whooping cough vaccine – is licensed for use in infants, allowing children as young as two months of age to be immunized.

1998

The first rotavirus vaccine is licensed for use in the United States.

1999

Rotavirus vaccine withdrawn from the market as a result of adverse events.

FDA recommends removing mercury from all products, including vaccines. Efforts begin to remove thimerosal, a mercury-based preservative, from vaccines.

2000 - Present

2000

Worldwide measles initiative launched. Although measles is declared no longer endemic in the United States, 757,000 children died of the disease worldwide in 2000.

CDC recommends that all young children receive the pneumococcal conjugate vaccine to prevent pneumonia, meningitis and other diseases.

2001

The tragic events of September 11 increases public concerns about the threat of bioterrorism. The United States establishes a plan to re-introduce smallpox vaccine if necessary, a vaccine thought never to be needed again.

2003

Measles declared no longer endemic in the Americas.

The first live attenuated influenza vaccine is licensed for use in people from 5 to 49 years of age.

The first immunization schedule for adults is introduced.

2004

The inactivated influenza vaccine is recommended for all children 6–23 months of age.

2005

The CDC declares that rubella is no longer endemic in the United States.

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FDA licenses the meningococcal conjugate vaccine to prevent invasive meningococcal diseases such as meningitis.

2006

FDA licenses the HPV (human papillomavirus) and rotavirus vaccines. HPV is a virus that causes genital warts and cervical cancer. Rotavirus is the world's leading cause of severe intestinal illness in young children.