

Inactivated Polio Vaccine (Imovax® Polio)



FACTS

What is polio?

Polio still exists. Several countries have ongoing polio outbreaks that can spread to other countries.

Polio is a very contagious disease spread from person to person, mainly through the fecal-oral route.

Most polio infections do not have symptoms. When symptoms are present, they start with fever, fatigue, headache and vomiting. As the disease progresses the symptoms lead to severe muscle pain, stiff neck and back. The disease can paralyze the muscles used for breathing, talking, eating, and walking. It can lead to total paralysis, respiratory failure and death.

What are the risks of the disease?

Polio is more common in children under the age of five years of age but anyone who is not vaccinated against polio, regardless of age, can get polio. Polio infections resulting in paralysis kill 2% to 5% of children and 15% to 30% of adults.

Why should my child be vaccinated?

Polio vaccine is legally required for attendance in school.

Polio vaccine is very effective against polio infection. When polio vaccine is given according to the recommended schedule, over 95% of people are protected against polio and close to 100% are protected after a booster dose. Vaccination also makes these diseases milder for those who may still get them.

Vaccination begins in infancy and continues in childhood. All infants, unimmunized children and adolescents not previously immunized against polio should be vaccinated.

Adult travellers to areas where polio is a risk may need a booster to protect them from polio infection.

Who should not get the polio vaccine?

Polio vaccine should **not** be given to anyone who has:

- A known allergy to any component of the polio vaccine.
- Had a reaction to a previous dose of polio-containing vaccine.
- A high fever or serious infection worse than a cold on the day of the school clinic.

Is the polio vaccine safe?

Yes. The most common side effects are mild redness and soreness at the site where the needle was given and fever. Side effects that are more serious are very rare.

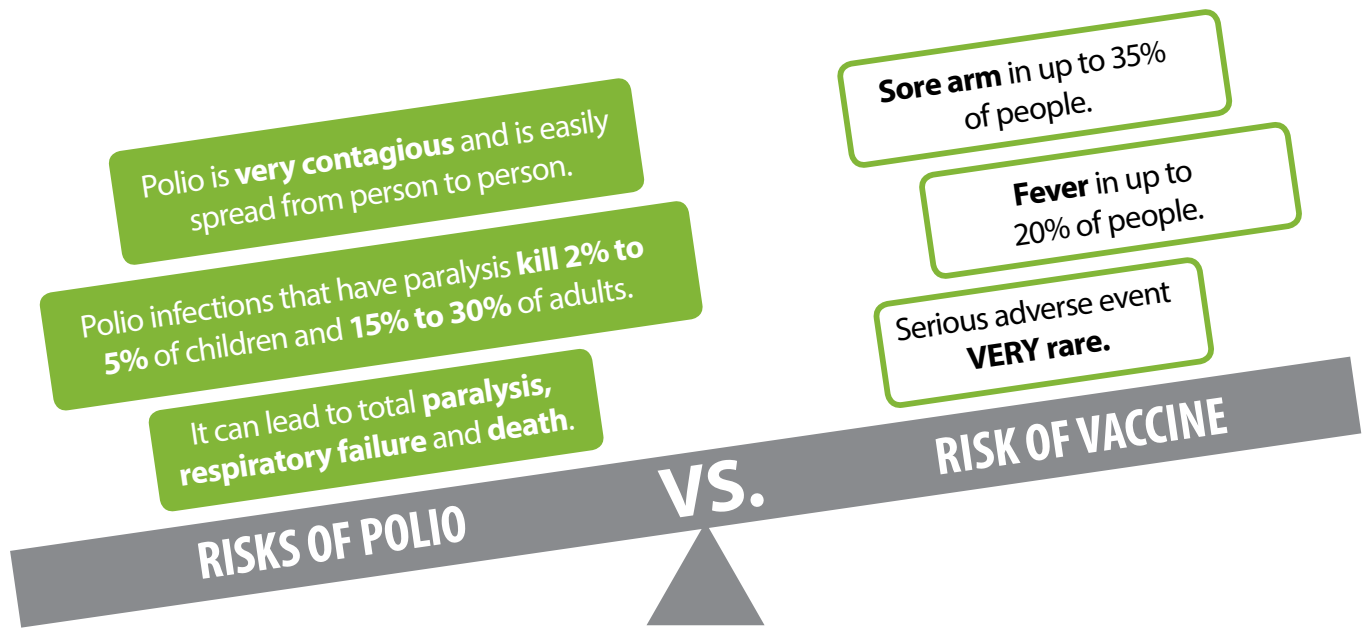
What if I decide not to vaccinate?

The vaccine is required by law (*Immunization of School Pupils Act Amendment, 2014*). Students who are not vaccinated may be suspended from school. Your child will be at risk of getting polio if you decide not to vaccinate.

Parents who choose not to vaccinate must complete a legal statement, known as a Statement of Conscience or Religious Belief. This form must be notarized.

There are some children who cannot get a vaccine for medical reasons. A doctor can fill out a medical exemption form. These forms must be brought to the Halton Region Health Department. More details are available at halton.ca/immunize.

Risk of polio vs. risk of vaccine



How can I prepare my child for vaccination?



Talk to your child about the vaccine.



Complete and return the consent form.



Review helpful ways to deal with fear or anxiety (count to ten, look away from needle, focus on breathing).



Make sure your child eats on clinic day.



Make sure your child wears a short sleeve shirt on clinic day.

Visit our website for more information

halton.ca/immunize

Learn more about:

- Vaccine preventable diseases
- Vaccines
- Safety
- Side effects
- Ingredients
- Importance of vaccinations to protect your family

If you have questions, ask your family doctor or dial 311.