

# How to hold your child to improve the vaccination experience

Children can feel more comfortable when sitting on or close to a parent or caregiver. Holding your child properly will help ensure that they are vaccinated safely.

Choose the comfort hold that works best for you and your child:

1

## Cradle

Gently cradle your baby, securing their arms and legs with your arms. This can be done while breastfeeding.



2

## Side-to-chest

Have your child sit on your lap in a sideways position. Your child's legs can go in between your legs.



3

## Chest-to-chest

Your child will sit on your lap with their chest against your chest and their legs to either side.



4

## Back-to-chest

Have your child sit on your lap with their back against your chest. Their legs can go on either side of your legs, or in between your legs.



Make sure the arm or thigh that is to be vaccinated is clear of clothing and visible to the immunizer. Hold the child's arms or legs firmly so that they cannot swat or kick at the needle as they are being vaccinated.

## Other tips to improve vaccination:



**Hold your child gently.** A tight hold may make your child more nervous.



If you are currently **breastfeeding**, you can do so before, during and after the immunization. Breastfeeding during immunization reduces pain and distress.



**Distract** your child with a toy, electronic device or by pointing out interesting things in the room.



Use **relaxation** techniques such as taking slow, deep breaths. Encourage your child to keep their arm relaxed.



Speak to your child in a **calming voice**.



**Stay positive** when speaking about the vaccine.