

# Vaccine Basics

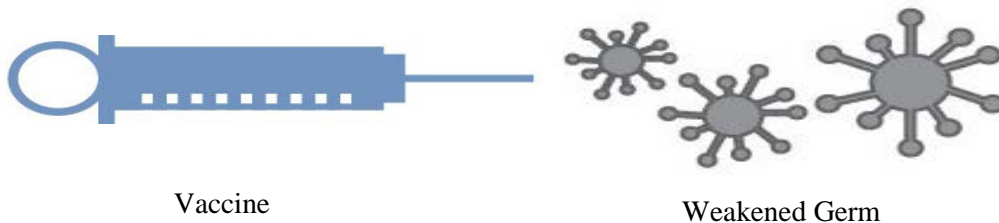
## How do vaccines prevent diseases?

Vaccines work with your body to safely develop immunity, or protection against disease, without making you sick. Vaccines help your body make antibodies. Antibodies act as guards and protect you from getting sick in the future. The antibodies are constantly on the lookout for real world germs. If they come across one they sound the alarm for your body to go on the defense and attack the germs right away. So when the real germ shows up, your body will recognize it and create a shield of protection (immunity).

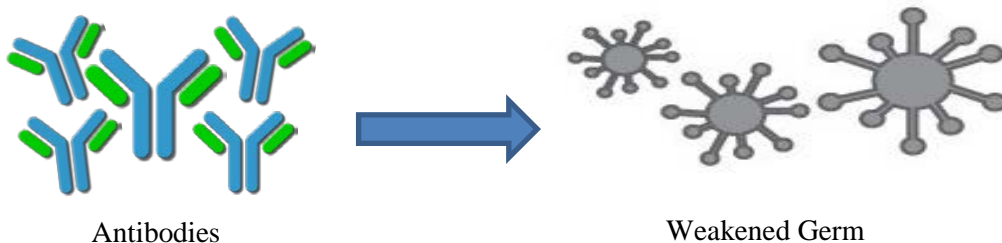
### Here's how it works:

Vaccines help to protect you by working with your body to [safely develop immunity](#) to disease [without making you sick](#).

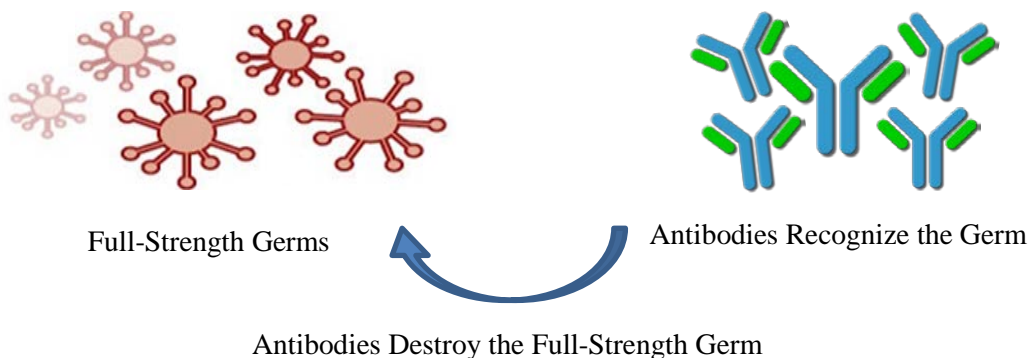
1. Weakened or killed forms of the germs that cause disease are injected into the body.



2. The body creates antibodies to fight the weakened germ.



3. If full-strength germs ever attack the body, the antibodies are there to destroy them.



## Why do adults need vaccines?

- Some adults were never vaccinated as children.
- Certain vaccines were not available when some adults were children.
- The protection against disease created by vaccines (immunity) can begin to fade over time.
- As we age, we become more likely to get serious disease caused by common infections like the flu.
- Vaccines help prevent the spread of disease to other people.

## Are vaccines safe?

Yes. [Vaccines are one of the safest ways to protect your health.](#)

Some adults may not be able to get certain vaccines due to preexisting health conditions. Check with your doctor or other provider about which vaccines are right for you.

## Can you get sick from a vaccine?

You can get mild side effects, such as a fever, from the vaccine. These symptoms are a [normal part of the body's process of building immunity](#), are [typically mild](#), and go away in a few days. They are less serious than getting the real disease.

## What are the possible side effects of vaccines?

Like any medication, vaccines can cause side effects. The most common are [mild and go away within a few days](#). Serious side effects following vaccination, which are usually due to an allergic reaction, are very rare, and doctors and clinical staff are trained to deal with them.

## Can vaccines cause Autism?

There is [no link](#) between vaccines and autism. Vaccine ingredients do not cause autism. For more information, visit <http://www.cdc.gov/vaccinesafety/concerns/autism.html> or <https://www.autismspeaks.org/what-autism/learn-more-autism/what-causes-autism>

(Adapted from: CDC, "Understanding How Vaccines Work", 2013;  
Children's Hospital of Philadelphia & AMA, "Vaccines and Adults", 2013, Children's Immunization Coalition of CO;  
MLive.com, "How do vaccines work? The science of immunizations", 2014)

