

# Polio Is a Serious Disease...

## Make sure your child is protected!

### What is polio?

Polio is a disease caused by a virus. People have feared polio for hundreds of years because it can paralyze arms, legs, and breathing muscles.

### How do you catch polio?

Polio virus is spread when invisible particles of feces (poop) get into your mouth. You can get polio by swallowing contaminated food or water or by putting contaminated objects in your mouth.



### Is polio serious?

Yes. Polio can be very serious. Sometimes the infected person's legs or arms become permanently paralyzed from the virus. Polio can also paralyze the breathing muscles and cause death.

### Is my child at risk?

Yes. Polio has been eliminated from the U.S., thanks to vaccination. But the virus is still present in some parts of the world, so your child would be at risk of infection if they traveled to certain countries without being vaccinated. The virus could also be brought into the U.S. by a traveler.

Ask your child's healthcare provider if your child is up to date for all vaccines!

### How can I protect my child from polio?

You can protect your child from polio with vaccination.



All children should get 3 doses of polio vaccine as babies (starting at 2 months of age) and a booster dose at 4–6 years old.

If your child misses a dose or gets behind schedule, make sure they get the next dose as soon as possible.

▶ For more information, visit [www.vaccineinformation.org](http://www.vaccineinformation.org)

For other vaccine handouts in this series, visit [www.immunize.org/vaccine-summaries](http://www.immunize.org/vaccine-summaries)



Saint Paul, Minnesota • [www.immunize.org](http://www.immunize.org)  
[www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4320.pdf](http://www.immunize.org/catg.d/p4320.pdf) • Item #P4320 (2/20)