



# Importance of Rotavirus vaccination in children

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## DESCRIPTION

Rotavirus is a highly contagious virus that causes diarrhoea. Prior to the development of the vaccine, most children up to the age of 5 were infected with the virus at least once. Rotavirus infections are unpleasant, but you can usually treat this infection with extra hydration at home to prevent dehydration. Occasionally, in cases of severe dehydration requires hydration through veins (intravenously) from the hospital. Rotavirus causes inflammation of the stomach and intestines. It can cause severe diarrhoea, vomiting, fever, abdominal pain and dehydration in infants, toddlers and some adults. Drugs can relieve symptoms, but there is no cure for rotavirus. Even after getting vaccinated, children may affect for many times. People of all ages can be infected with rotavirus. However, it mainly occurs in children under the age of one. It is highly contagious and most children were infected with rotavirus by the age of five. Typically, children in daycare or other programs with large numbers of children are at higher risk. Children between the ages of 3 months and 3 years who are not vaccinated are most prone to illness. Some children may not be vaccinated due to a history of allergic reactions to the components of the vaccine or other health reasons identified by their healthcare provider. Rotavirus spreads by contact with stool (poop) (Parashar, 1998).

## Causes

Rotavirus is present in the stool of infected individuals 2 days before symptoms appear and for up to 10 days after symptoms disappear. During this time, the virus can easily spread by hand-to-mouth contact even if the infected person is asymptomatic. If you have rotavirus and do not wash your hands after going to the toilet, or your child has rotavirus and you have changed your child's diapers or helped your child use the toilet If you don't wash your hands later the virus can spread to anything you are touching, including food, toys and tools. Infection can continue if others touch your unwashed hands or contaminated objects and then touch their

mouth (Crawford, 2017). The virus can continue to infect unsterilized surfaces for weeks or months. It's possible to be infected with rotavirus more than once, even if you've been vaccinated. However, repeated infections are typically less severe (Bernstein, 2009).

## Symptoms

If your child is infected with rotavirus, the symptoms will not appear for about 2 days. Then there is fever, vomiting and abdominal pain. Rotavirus usually begins with these symptoms and then declines. Diarrhoea begins after the first three symptoms have stopped. Diarrhoea can last 5 to 7 days when the virus passes through the child's system. Lethargy, frequent vomiting, decreased desire to drink liquid, black or blood or pus-filled stools, high temperatures in infants under 6 months, and high temperatures over 24 hours in infants over 6 months. With all vomiting and diarrhoea, your child may not feel like eating or drinking. This can cause dehydration and even life-threatening. Elderly people especially those with other illnesses and symptoms can also become dehydrated. Immediate doctor consultation is required If you experience dehydration such as anxiety, crying without tears, less urination or dry diapers, dizziness, dry mouth or throat, severe drowsiness, light skin, or sunken eyes. Adults often have similar symptoms, but tend to be less severe (Dennehy, 2008).

## Rotavirus Vaccination

Rotavirus is easy to infect infants. The virus can cause severe watery diarrhoea, vomiting, fever and abdominal pain. Children with rotavirus disease can become dehydrated and may need to be hospitalized. Good hygiene, such as hand washing and cleanliness, is important, but not enough to limit the spread of the disease. Rotavirus vaccines are the best way to protect your child from rotavirus disease. Most vaccinated children (about 9 out of 10) are protected from severe rotavirus disease. About 7 out of 10 children are protected from all degrees of rotavirus disease. Currently,

two infant rotavirus vaccines are approved in the United States. RotaTeq® (RV5) is inoculated in three doses at the age of 2, 4, and 6 months, and Rotalix® (RV1) is inoculated in two doses at 2 and 4 months of age. The first dose of both vaccines should be given before the child is 15 weeks old. Children should be vaccinated with all doses of rotavirus vaccine before they are 8 months old. Rotavirus vaccine is part of routine immunization of children. Both vaccines are given by putting the drops in child's mouth (Anderson, 2004).

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