

## Frequently Asked Questions

### Are vaccines safe and effective?

Yes, vaccines are tested many times before they are approved for use. They are safe, and side effects are usually mild and last 2-3 days (sore arm, low-grade fever). These normal reactions are a sign that the immune system is responding to the vaccine and preparing to fight the disease. In addition, vaccines are very effective. Since the 1950s, they have saved 154 million lives. If you have any doubts or different and longer-lasting symptoms, visit your health center.

### Why is it important to get vaccinated?

Thanks to vaccines, polio, measles, rubella, and tetanus in infants have been eliminated in the Americas. However, the viruses and bacteria that cause them can travel with unprotected people to our continent from all over the world with great ease. These people often do not yet have the disease, but can already be contagious. This can cause, in a short time, thousands of deaths and even more people to live with the long-term complications that these diseases cause.

### Why do some people get sick even if they are vaccinated?

The full protection of a vaccine generally begins 14 days after receiving it and reaches the highest protection after receiving the recommended doses.

Some protect completely against the disease, and others, such as vaccines against respiratory diseases like Influenza or COVID-19, help to make the disease milder and thus prevent hospitalizations.

## Myths

### “Vaccines cause autism.” FALSE

**There are no rigorous studies showing a link between any vaccine and autism spectrum disorders. This belief originates from research that has already been conclusively refuted, withdrawn from the journal in which it was published, and the doctor who published it lost his medical license.**

### “It’s better to get sick than to get a seasonal flu shot.” FALSE

**The flu can make you seriously ill, especially if you are in at-risk groups (pregnant women, children under 5, older adults, and people with chronic illnesses). Getting a seasonal flu vaccine is a safe option and should be repeated every year, as viruses change. Each year, the vaccine is modified to be as effective as possible against the flu strains expected for the season.**

Get up to date



Frequently Asked Questions



# PAHO



# Vaccination Calendar

Immunization for all Immunization for

## Your decision makes a difference

Vaccination Week in the Americas

# Saint Maarten

## Your decision makes a difference

Get vaccinated at different stages of your life to prevent the following diseases:



**Pregnant women**

**COVID-19**



**Newborns**



**First year of life  
<12 months**

**Diphtheria  
Tetanus  
Whooping Cough  
Polio  
Hib disease  
Hepatitis B  
Pneumococcal disease**



**Second year of life  
12-23 months**

**Measles  
Rubella  
Mumps  
Pneumococcal disease  
Diphtheria  
Tetanus  
Whooping Cough  
Polio  
Hib disease**



**Children**

**Measles  
Mumps  
Rubella  
Diphtheria  
Tetanus  
Polio**



**Adolescents**

**HPV infection  
COVID-19  
Diphtheria  
Tetanus  
Polio**



**Adults**

**COVID-19**



**Health & care workers**

**COVID-19**



**Older persons**

**COVID-19**