

# Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) Vaccine

## Get protected, get immunized.

- Vaccines make your immune system stronger. They build antibodies to help prevent diseases.
- Immunization is safe. It is much safer to get immunized than to get these diseases.

## What is the Hib vaccine?

The Hib vaccine protects against Haemophilus influenzae type b.

## What is Haemophilus influenzae type b?

Haemophilus influenzae type b (Hib) is a bacteria that can cause meningitis, which is a serious infection of the fluid and lining that cover the brain and spinal cord or blood.

It can lead to lifelong disabilities and death.

## Who is most at risk?

You have a higher risk of serious infection if you:

- are age 4 years or younger
- have a weak immune system
- have no spleen or a spleen that is not working properly
- have a cochlear implant

## How does it spread?

Hib is spread by coughing or sneezing. Some people do not have symptoms but can still spread the disease.

## Who should get the Hib vaccine?

Children under age 5 years who have been immunized for diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, and polio and only need the Hib vaccine can get this vaccine.

Older children and adults may also get this vaccine if they have a high risk of severe Hib disease because of health problems. These may include those with no spleen, a weak immune system, or those who have a cochlear implant.

## How many doses do I need?

The number of doses you need depends on your age and why you are getting the vaccine.

You usually get 3 doses (the primary series) of the Hib vaccine as a baby in a combined vaccine that also protects against other diseases. This is followed by an extra (booster) dose at age 18 months.

If you have certain health problems, you may need more doses after age 5 years.

## Are there other vaccines that protect against Hib?

**DTaP-IPV-Hib-HB** protects against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio, Hib and hepatitis B. As part of the routine immunization schedule, babies get this vaccine starting at age 2 months.

**DTaP-IPV-Hib** protects against diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis (whooping cough), polio and Hib. As part of the routine immunization schedule, this vaccine is given to children born before March 1, 2018, who are under age 7 years, as part of their primary series and to all children age 18 months as a booster dose.

## How well does the vaccine work?

After the primary series and a booster dose, protection is over 95%. It may be less if you have a weak immune system.

## Where can I get the Hib vaccine?

You can get the vaccine at your local public health or community health centre.

## Are there side effects from the Hib vaccine?

There can be side effects from the Hib vaccine, but they tend to be mild and go away in a few days. Side effects may include:

- redness where you had the needle that may look red on lighter skin and purple on darker skin
- swelling, a hard spot, or feeling sore where you had the needle
- crying, feeling tired, or getting upset easily
- fever
- not feeling hungry or not wanting to eat (poor appetite)
- vomiting (throwing up) or loose stool (diarrhea)

At least 1 out of 100 people who got this vaccine reported 1 or more of these side effects. In some cases, it is unknown if the vaccine caused these side effects.

It is important to stay at the clinic for 15 minutes after your vaccine. Some people may have a rare but serious allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. If anaphylaxis happens, you will get medicine to treat the symptoms.

See reverse for more information.

It is rare to have a serious side effect. Call Health Link at 811 to report any serious or unusual side effects.

### How can I manage side effects?

- To help with soreness and swelling, put a cool, wet cloth over the area where you had the needle.
- There is medicine to help with fever or pain. Check with your healthcare provider if you are not sure what medicine or dose to take. Follow the directions on the package.
- Some people with health problems, such as a weak immune system, must call their healthcare provider if they get a fever. If you have been told to do this, call your healthcare provider even if you think the fever is from the vaccine.

### Who may not be able to get the Hib vaccine?

You may not be able to get this vaccine if:

- You have an allergy to any part of the vaccine. Be sure to tell your healthcare provider about any allergies you may have.
- You had a severe (serious) or unusual side effect after this vaccine or one like it.

If either of these apply, check with your healthcare provider or public health nurse before you get the vaccine.

Although you can get the vaccine if you have a mild illness, such as a cold or fever, you should stay home until you are feeling better to prevent spreading your illness to others.

### I have a fear of needles. How can I prepare for my immunization?

Many adults and children are afraid of needles. There are things you can do before, during, and after immunization to be more comfortable.



Scan the QR code, visit [ahs.ca/vaccinecomfort](https://ahs.ca/vaccinecomfort), or call Health Link at 811 for information.

### For more information about immunization



Call Health Link at **811**



Scan the QR code or go to [ahs.ca/immunize](https://ahs.ca/immunize)