

# Community Immunity

The role of vaccines in keeping our communities healthy



**We recycle, support local businesses, and help our neighbors. That's part of building a healthy community. But what can families do to prevent infectious diseases?**

## What is Community Immunity?

Community Immunity is when the vaccinated community helps protect those who are unvaccinated (against diseases like whooping cough, measles, flu and more!). When most people are immunized, diseases can't spread as easily. This protects the few among us who are not immune.

## How does Community Immunity keep us safe?

It protects unvaccinated people we pass in the supermarket, at the playground, and those we know and love:

- **Babies too young to be immunized** (whooping cough can be life-threatening)
- **People with weak immune systems** (due to disease or medical treatments—like asthma, cancer, or chemotherapy)
- **Unvaccinated pregnant women** (chickenpox and other diseases can harm the baby)
- **Seniors** (flu can be deadly)
- **Anyone allergic to a vaccine**

About 80% to 94% community of people in your community need to be vaccinated to shield people most at risk.

California's overall vaccination rate is high—but not everywhere. Some schools have as many as 40% to 80% unvaccinated kids. Your child or community could be at risk.

Community Immunity helps prevent disease outbreaks. Once exposed to a disease, it's too late to vaccinate. Unvaccinated kids have a high risk of getting sick or sent home from school— for days or weeks— to keep a contagious disease from spreading.

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### What can I do?

- **Get your family immunized.** Vaccines (including boosters for older kids and adults) remain the best protection against many serious diseases. Insist that anyone who cares for your children be fully immunized too!
- **Seek reliable information**—there’s a lot of conflicting advice out there. Bring questions and sources to your family doctor.
- **Practice healthy habits.** Cough/sneeze into a sleeve, wash hands often, and stay home when sick.

### Visit these trusted sites

#### Centers for Disease Control

[www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/immunity-types.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/vac-gen/immunity-types.htm)

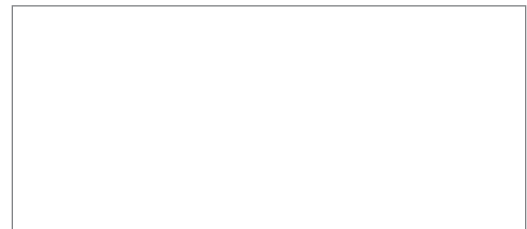
#### Shot by Shot: Stories of Vaccine Preventable Diseases

[www.shotbyshot.org/](http://www.shotbyshot.org/)

#### National Network for Immunization Information

[www.immunizationinfo.org/](http://www.immunizationinfo.org/)

*The California Immunization Coalition (CIC) is a non-profit, public-private partnership dedicated to achieving and maintaining full immunization protection to promote health and prevent serious illness across the life span.*



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