

## Transcript Season 3 Episode 6: Immunizations – Yes or No?

### Podcast Opener:

*(Music playing.)* Tackle your “Adulting” To Do list with the Grown Up U: Facts for Success podcast. Keep listening as we celebrate Season 3 with podcasts to help steer you in the right direction by providing useful advice for living an independent and satisfying life as a young adult. *(Music ends.)*

### Podcast Script:

Phillips County Family and Consumer Sciences Agent, Julie Goings here to talk to you about the value of immunizations.

Oftentimes, parents spend time wondering whether they should vaccinate their children. There are many myths which seem to plant the seeds of doubt in their minds. Quite simply, each family will have to do what they feel is best; but the best decision for our earth is “yes”. Routine vaccination helps children to develop the ability to fight off germs before we are exposed to potentially life-threatening diseases. The vaccines are tested to ensure that they are safe and effective.

Different types of vaccines work in different ways to offer protection. With all types, though, your body will “remember” how to fight that virus in the future. Immunity is the body’s way of preventing disease. We are born without fully developed immune systems, which have to get stronger over time.

Children are exposed to thousands of germs every day. This comes through the food they eat, air they breathe, and things they put in their mouths. A baby’s immune system can fight most daily germs, but there are some that are serious and deadly that just cannot be handled. That is why babies need vaccines at such an early age - to strengthen their immune systems. The vaccine introduces a very small amount of the disease and the body practices learning to fight it.

You might notice that some vaccines have to be given in multiple doses. That is so that a very small amount can be introduced to the body each time. As children grow, they may need some boosters, to remind their body how to fight out that disease. There are also some vaccines we get as adolescents and adults because we are not likely to be exposed to the diseases until we are older.

Before a new vaccine is given to people, extensive lab testing is done. Once testing in people begins, it may take years before clinical studies are complete and the vaccine is licensed. The United States has a long-standing vaccine history and safety system that ensures our vaccines are as safe as possible. Both the CDC & FDA take many steps to make sure vaccines are safe both before & after use is begun.

Like all medicine, vaccines can have some side effects, which are usually mild. This might include fever, body aches, and tenderness at the site of injection. These usually go away in a day or two. More serious side effects are very rare. Your doctor will be able to tell you more about sensitivities or allergies you might have. In the few instances of severe reaction, doctors and clinic staff are trained to deal with them.

There has also been a long-running rumor that vaccines cause autism, which is simply not true. In the event that a child has a serious medical condition that weakens their immune system, they may be unable to take vaccinations; however, those children will be extremely guarded from exposure to diseases.

Many diseases, like measles and whooping cough, that once killed people have been wiped out due to effective vaccines. It is much better to prevent a disease than to treat it. While we take a flu vaccine, many complain that they still got the flu....that is because there are many strains of flu. The yearly vaccine we take is to protect us from the most common and the more serious types. Some diseases, like smallpox, were so effectively eliminated that there is no longer a reason to even vaccinate against them.

We are currently advised to be immunized against polio, tetanus, flu, hepatitis, rubella, measles, whooping cough and pneumonia. Of course, we now have the option for others, like the COVID-19 vaccine, which was created because of a new urgent need. We know many who have had the vaccine but still got the disease, but we have to trust that an active immune system helped them have lighter cases than they would have had without the shots.

Thanks to scientific advances, today's vaccines protect children from more diseases using fewer antigens. Combination vaccines also cut down on the number of shots needed, as many diseases are closely related.

If we stop vaccinating, the few cases of potentially life-threatening diseases could very quickly become tens or hundreds or hundreds of thousands of cases. Many underdeveloped countries still see cases of these illnesses, and international travel could cause a fast spread.

When weighing the decision to vaccinate your family, consider the protection it gives our communities and neighbors. Help stop myths and misinformation that might scare someone from protecting their family. Have informed conversations with your trusted healthcare

provider and do your research. Learning all you can, will empower you to make the best decision for you and yours.

For more information about. In your health. Go to [uaex.uada.edu](http://uaex.uada.edu) and type vaccine in the search. Another valuable resource is the Arkansas Department of Health website (<https://www.healthy.arkansas.gov/> ) or the CDC website (<https://www.cdc.gov/> ).

**Podcast Closer:**

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