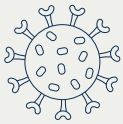


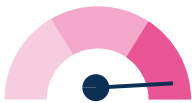
## UNDERSTANDING THE RISKS

# Getting Rotavirus vs. Getting Vaccinated



We all want to make the best health choices for our children. So how risky is rotavirus compared to the vaccine that prevents rotavirus?

### ROTAVIRUS FAST FACTS



#### HOW CONTAGIOUS?

**Highly contagious.** Rotavirus spreads easily in young children and is most common in children 3–36 months old. It can be spread by touching objects with the rotavirus on it like changing tables, toys, and doorknobs. It is more common in the fall through spring.<sup>1,2,3</sup>



#### HOW SERIOUS?

**Very serious.**

Before vaccines, rotavirus was the leading cause of severe diarrhea in young children in the United States. It can be extremely dangerous because children can quickly become dehydrated.<sup>1,2,3,4</sup> Before vaccines became available in the United States, each year rotavirus caused:

**Illness:** About 3 million children<sup>3,5</sup>

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**Hospitalizations:** 55,000–70,000 children<sup>2,5</sup>

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**Emergency room visits:** 200,000 children<sup>2,4</sup>

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**Death:** 20–60 children<sup>2,5</sup>

## VACCINE FAST FACTS



### HOW EFFECTIVE?

7 out of 10 children will be entirely protected from rotavirus, and 9 out of 10 children will be protected from severe rotavirus.<sup>6,7</sup>



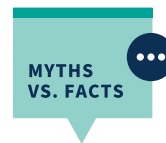
### SAFETY RECORDS

The first rotavirus vaccine was approved in 1998. The current rotavirus vaccine has been in use since 2006.<sup>3,5</sup>



### HOW SAFE?

There is a small risk of intestinal blockage (intussusception). The risk is about 1 in 20,000 to 1 in 100,000 vaccinated infants.<sup>3,5,6</sup>



### MYTH BUSTER

Is rotavirus “just diarrhea”? No. The truth is that rotavirus can be deadly. Over 185,000 children worldwide die every year from rotavirus. Rotavirus deaths are very rare in the United States, in large part due to the vaccine, but children with the infection can require hospital care.<sup>2,3,8</sup>



**Five separate safety systems continuously monitor all vaccines for as long as the vaccines are given.<sup>9</sup>**

**Learn more at [hhs.gov/immunization/basics/safety/index.html](https://hhs.gov/immunization/basics/safety/index.html).**

## COMPARING THE TWO

### ROTAVIRUS

### VACCINE TO PREVENT ROTAVIRUS

#### Common Mild to Moderate Symptoms and Common Side Effects<sup>2,3,5,7,10,11</sup>

Common symptoms of rotavirus can include:

- Fever
- Severe diarrhea
- Vomiting
- Stomach pain
- Dehydration

Common side effects of the vaccine to prevent rotavirus are usually mild and last 1–2 days. If side effects occur, they can include:

- Fussiness
- Temporary diarrhea
- Vomiting

#### Rare, More Serious Symptoms or Complications and Rare Side Effects<sup>2,3,5,7,10,11</sup>

Serious symptoms or complications of rotavirus vary and can include:

- Serious dehydration requiring hospitalization
- Death

Serious side effects of the vaccine to prevent rotavirus vary and can include:

- Intussusception

Sources:

1. Cedars Sinai: <https://www.cedars-sinai.org/health-library/diseases-and-conditions---pediatrics/r/rotavirus-infection-in-children.html>
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): <https://www.cdc.gov/rotavirus/hcp/clinical-overview>
3. CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/pinkbook/hcp/table-of-contents/chapter-19-rotavirus.html>
4. Immunize.org: <https://www.immunize.org/ask-experts/topic/rotavirus/>
5. Children's Hospital of Philadelphia: <https://www.chop.edu/centers-programs/vaccine-education-center/vaccine-details/rotavirus-vaccine>
6. CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/rotavirus/vaccines/index.html>
7. National Foundation for Infectious Diseases: <https://www.nfid.org/infectious-diseases/faq-rotavirus>
8. Johns Hopkins University: <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/sites/default/files/2024-02/rota-brief3-burden2022ax.pdf>
9. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services: <https://www.hhs.gov/immunization/basics/safety/index.html>
10. Mayo Clinic: <https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/rotavirus/symptoms-causes/syc-20351300>
11. CDC: <https://www.cdc.gov/rotavirus/about/index.html>