

WHAT IS A VACCINE?

VACCINE BASICS

A vaccine, also known as an immunization, involves injecting a small amount of liquid into your body that contains antibodies. The antibodies help your body stay protected and fight off certain diseases and illness.

STEP ONE

Vaccines are injected into the fat or muscles in your upper arm. Tell your nurse which arm you would prefer the vaccine to be given.

STEP TWO

Your nurse will clean your arm with a wet alcohol wipe to get rid of any germs on your skin.

STEP THREE

Your nurse will use their fingers to gently push and hold the muscle on your arm.

STEP FOUR

Your nurse will use a needle to inject the vaccine into your muscle. You may feel a pinch and some pressure.

STEP FIVE

Your nurse will remove the needle. If there is any blood at the injection site, your nurse will wipe it away with a soft gauze. They will place a band-aid on your arm.

COPING

While getting a vaccine can be stressful, there are many ways to make the process easier.

Relax your body.

While it may seem difficult, keeping your body relaxed will help keep your muscles from tensing up, making the vaccine easier.

- Take deep breaths, counting to 5 as you inhale and then counting to 5 as you exhale
- Listen to music or watch a video
- Imagine how your body feels when you are relaxed
 - Where are you?
 - What are you doing?
 - Who are you with?

Tell the medical team what might help you feel more comfortable.

Ask yourself these questions:

- Would you like to sit up or lay down?
- Would you like a support person to sit next to you or hold your hand?
- Does it help you to watch the vaccine or to look away?
- Would you like a 1-2-3 countdown before the poke?

Use pain management tools.

- Buzzy is a vibrating bee that is held against your skin right above the area your vaccine will be placed
- The vibration distracts your brain from the poke and may help so that you do not feel it as much
- Let your nurse know if you would like to use Buzzy