

DON'T WAIT, VACCINATE!

Immunization for First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples and Communities

18-Month Perpetual Calendar

January to June



National Collaborating Centre
for Infectious Diseases
Centre de collaboration nationale
des maladies infectieuses



National Collaborating Centre
for Indigenous Health
Centre de collaboration nationale
de la santé autochtone

CHRONIC AND INFECTIOUS DISEASES

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View and download the fact sheet series and other resources supporting vaccine confidence amongst First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and communities online at: nccih.ca and nccid.ca.

To learn more about vaccines for children, youth and adults, visit your local health centre or go to: www.canada.ca/en/public-health/services/immunization-vaccines.html

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La version française est également disponible sur les sites Web cnisa.ca et ccnmi.ca sous le titre : *N'attendez pas, vaccinez! Vaccination à l'intention des peuples et des communautés des Premières Nations, inuits et métis – calendrier perpétuel – janvier à juin*.

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What is a vaccine?

A vaccine is a medicine that protects people from getting different diseases, such as influenza (flu) and measles. These diseases can be very serious and even deadly.

The body's immune system is a network of organs, cells and tissues that all work together to protect the body against disease. When new germs enter your body, the immune system makes special proteins called antibodies to fight the germs, but the germs can still make you sick. Vaccines help your immune system make antibodies to fight specific diseases, without getting the disease itself. Vaccines also keep you from getting severely sick, if you are exposed to the disease germs again in the future.

DID YOU KNOW?

Vaccination and immunization mean the same thing.



JANUARY



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Vaccines offer good protection

First Nations, Inuit and Métis Elders share knowledge of ‘good medicines’ that have been used for generations to prevent sickness and heal people who are sick. Many of these medicines are still used today.



Vaccines are also good medicine. They help protect children, youth and adults from many infectious diseases, at any age and all stages of life.



DID YOU KNOW?

Vaccines protect children, youth and adults from many dangerous infectious diseases, like mumps and diphtheria.



FEBRUARY



Louis Riel Day is the 3rd Monday in February

Pink Day is the last Wednesday in February

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Vaccines are safe

Vaccines are safe and effective. Canada has a strict process to approve and monitor vaccines and how they are used. Vaccines are always checked regularly for safety, including tracking any side effects and reactions.

The vaccine is much safer than getting the disease.

DID YOU KNOW?

Immunization is the best way to protect against vaccine-preventable diseases at any age. Vaccines are safe and effective. They keep people's immune systems strong!



MARCH



Easter falls between March 22 and April 25

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8	International Women's Day
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17	St. Patrick's Day
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20	Spring Equinox – First Day of Spring
21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
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Immunizations are still needed today

Immunizations have helped stop the spread of many diseases. Some diseases – like polio and diphtheria – have almost completely disappeared in Canada.



If people do not get immunized, vaccine-preventable diseases will become more common again. Getting immunized helps to keep these diseases under control for everyone – for good.



DID YOU KNOW?

Over the last 60 years, vaccines have saved more lives than any other medical intervention.



APRIL



Easter falls between March 22 and April 25

1	April Fool's Day
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When should we get our vaccines?

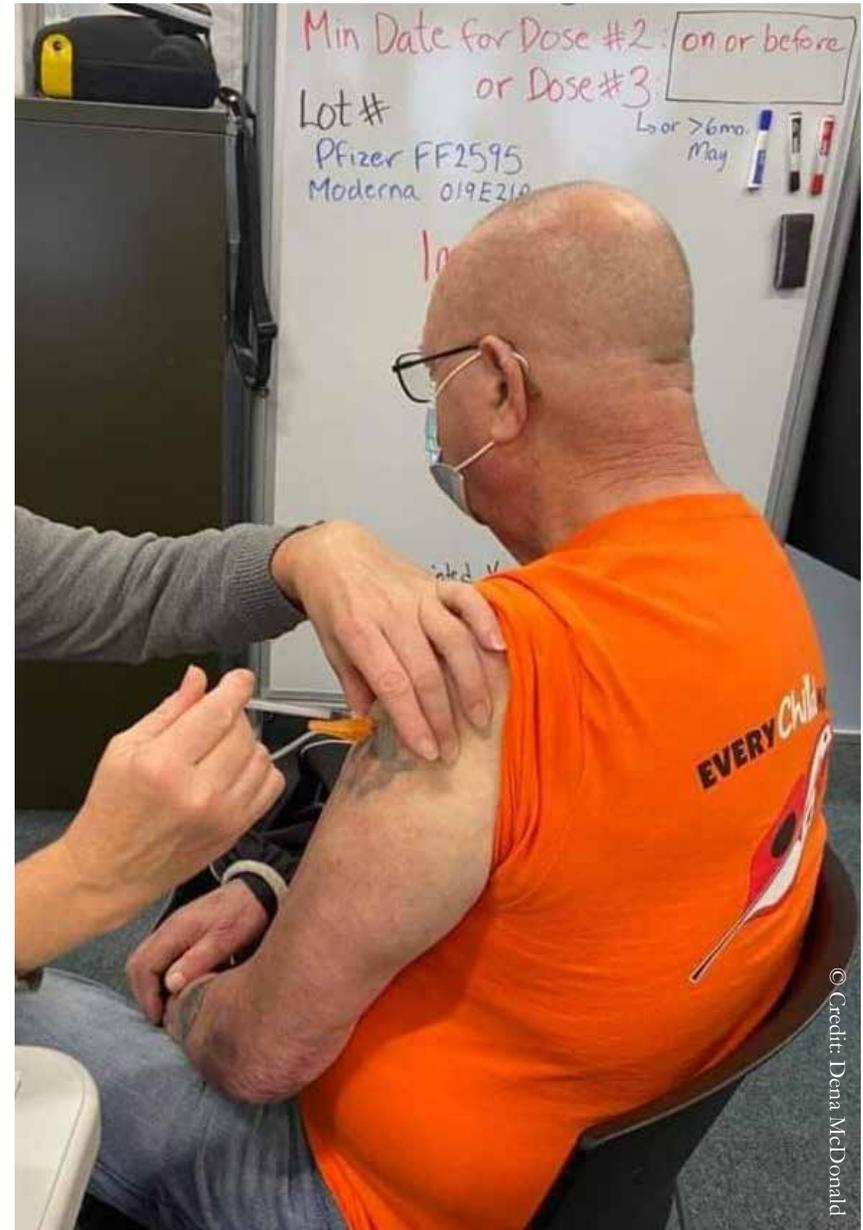
Timing is very important when it comes to immunization. Vaccines work best when given on time, beginning when babies are still very young. Babies are most vulnerable to diseases under the age of 2 years.

Many vaccines are recommended in childhood to offer protection from a wide range of diseases. Some vaccines only protect for a certain number of years. Teenagers and adults need booster shots for some vaccines to continue to be protected. Some diseases only affect older children or adults (like HPV and shingles). Those vaccines may be offered at different life stages.

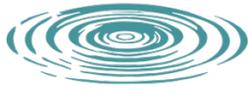
Teens and adults can get vaccine-preventable diseases if they missed some vaccines when they were children. Talk to your health care provider to make sure you are up to date with your vaccines. Having all your vaccines helps to keep you, your family, and community healthy.

DID YOU KNOW?

Children are best protected from vaccine-preventable diseases when they receive all doses of their vaccines on time.



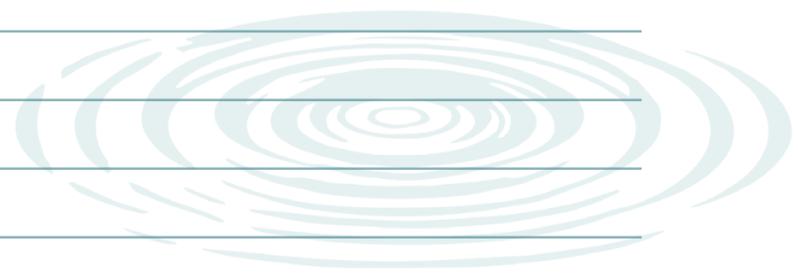
MAY



Mother's Day is celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of May
Victoria Day is celebrated on the Monday preceding May 25

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5	National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Peoples (MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+)
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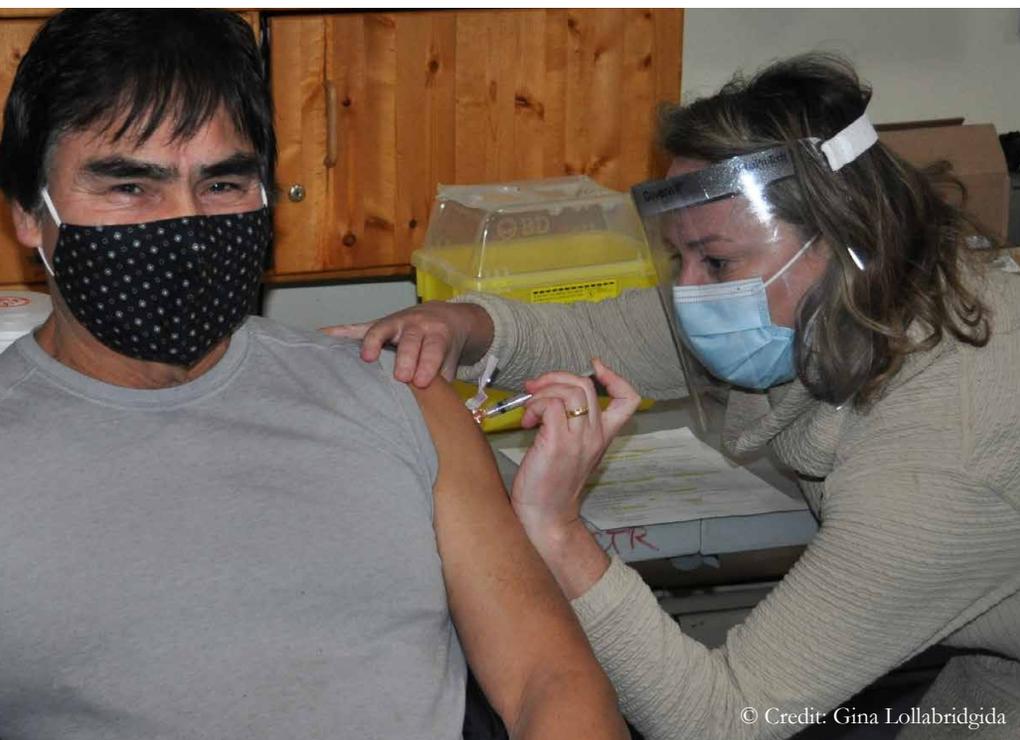


How do we remember which vaccines we had and which ones we need?

Health care providers who give vaccines keep track of which vaccines they have given you. If you receive a vaccine from someone other than your main health care provider (or if you see many different health care providers), it is a good idea to keep track and share your records with your main health care provider (if you have one). You may need to show proof you received certain vaccines for travel, school or work. Young

children usually need to prove they are fully vaccinated before starting daycare or school.

If you are not certain whether you need a vaccine or whether you have already had one kind, ask your health care provider at your next appointment. – they might have a record or make a recommendation.



DID YOU KNOW?

Getting vaccines at a young age will protect children in early childhood and throughout their lives. You can ask your health care provider for a record of your immunizations and your children's.

JUNE



June is National Indigenous History Month
Father's Day is the 3rd Sunday in June

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21	National Indigenous People's Day First Day of Summer
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Vaccines are important for good health

Vaccines are an important part of staying healthy. Learning the facts about vaccines can help parents, caregivers and other adults make informed decisions to protect children, youth, themselves and their communities.

DID YOU KNOW?

Breastfeeding offers some protection from diseases early in your child's life, but that protection goes away very quickly once breastfeeding stops.



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JULY



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Exposure to germs

We are exposed to germs every day, whether from children playing at daycare or at school, visiting friends, going to appointments in the community, or attending a cultural event or community feast.

Germs can spread very easily and quickly. Coughing, sneezing, talking, or singing are some of the ways germs can spread from one person to the next. Germs also spread when people touch something that has germs on it, and then touch their eyes, nose or mouth.

Some germs cause diseases that can be very serious and may even lead to death. It is important for children, youth and adults to get immunized on time so their immune systems are ready to fight off these serious diseases. Getting immunized at a young age will protect children during early childhood and throughout their lives.



DID YOU KNOW?

Germs can live for hours or days on surfaces like doorknobs, TV remotes and toys.

AUGUST



The Civic Holiday is the first Monday in August

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How to prevent the spread of germs:



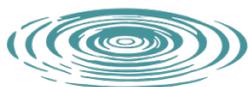
DID YOU KNOW?

There are ways to prevent the spread of many infectious diseases in your home and in your community.

- Keep immunizations up-to-date.
- Cough and sneeze into your arm, not your hand.
- Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth with your hands.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds or, if hand washing is not possible, use hand sanitizer.
- Clean objects and surfaces regularly with a household cleaner.
- Do not share personal items such as toothbrushes, razors, drinking cups, dishes from community feasts, makeup, etc.
- If you are sick, stay at home and try to limit contact with others.
- Eat well and be active every day to maintain a strong body, mind and spirit.



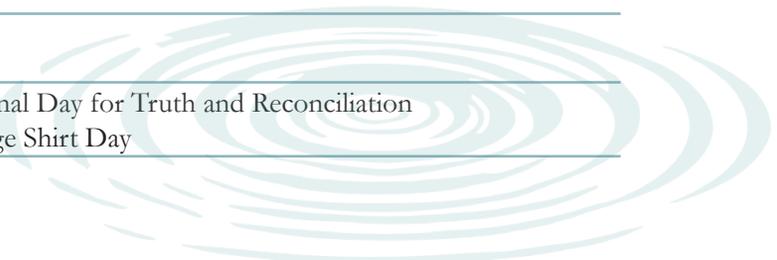
SEPTEMBER



Labour Day is celebrated on the first Monday of September

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22	First Day of Fall
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30	National Day for Truth and Reconciliation Orange Shirt Day



Get the facts, not the flu!

The yearly seasonal influenza vaccine is a good way to protect yourself, your family and your community.

Pregnant people, young children, people with chronic diseases and the elderly are among those at higher risk of complications and hospitalization from influenza. The influenza vaccine is recommended for people 6 months of age or older. Speak with your health care provider about getting the influenza vaccine every year.



DID YOU KNOW?

The seasonal influenza virus usually changes from year-to-year, which is why it is important to get the flu vaccine every year.



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OCTOBER



Thanksgiving falls on the 2nd Monday of October

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31	Halloween



© Credit: Annette Cristo



DID YOU KNOW?

There are vaccines that can protect adults from shingles and most common types of pneumonia.

Immunization and adults

Vaccines are not just for children and youth. Adults also need to get immunized to boost their protection against some vaccine preventable diseases and to build immunity against other diseases that are more common in adults.



NOVEMBER



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What kind of reactions can I expect?

Most people feel fine after being immunized, but some may feel mild side effects such as:

- Infants and children may be fussy or sleepy (more than usual)
- Have a low fever
- Develop a sore red spot or a small amount of swelling in the area of the injection site
- Have soreness in the vaccinated arm for a few days

These symptoms are common and generally do not last for longer than a day or two. Before you leave your health care provider's office or public health office, ask your nurse or health care provider what you can do to ease any soreness or discomfort from the vaccination.

Serious side effects from vaccines are very rare.



DID YOU KNOW?

Most people can be vaccinated, even if they have a cold or low fever.



DECEMBER



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21	First Day of Winter
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24	Christmas Eve
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26	Boxing Day
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31	New Year's Eve



© Credit: Yolande Howrie



How can I help my young children during immunization?

Children notice how their parents or caregivers are feeling. If you are anxious or nervous, your children may feel this. Staying calm and touching, talking, singing or cuddling with your children during an immunization will help to make the experience more comfortable for them – and you. Distracting your children with toys, videos or stories will also help to reduce any pain and distress.

You can help your baby to be relaxed:

- Make sure your baby is comfortable (not hungry, dry diaper, comfortable clothing)
- Try to be calm. Your baby may sense when you are anxious or nervous and may react in response to your emotions.
- Soothe your baby with comforting words. Talk or sing softly. Touch, or cuddle your baby.
- Look into your baby's eyes and smile.
- It will be easier to give the needle if your baby is held steady. Your nurse or doctor will help to keep your baby still.
- Breastfeed or bottle feed your baby before, during and/or after immunization.
- It is okay if your baby cries during and/or after the immunization.

JANUARY



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DID YOU KNOW?

You can help your children have a positive experience when they get a vaccine.

It is a good idea to tell children about getting immunized just before the procedure. Talk with your children and tell them:

- Why they are getting a vaccine: “To keep you, your family and your friends safe!”
- What will happen: “You will get a medicine in your arm.”
- How it will feel: “You will feel a poke in your arm that will feel like a pinch, but it will only last a few seconds! You can help by staying as still as you can”.
- Encourage your children to bring their favourite toy, book or music to the visit.



FEBRUARY



Louis Riel Day is the 3rd Monday in February

Pink Day is the last Wednesday in February

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2	Groundhog Day
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14	Valentine's Day
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What about older children, youth and adults?

How to help your child during immunization:

- Speak to your child ahead of time to help them prepare for the vaccination.
- Try to be calm. Your child will know if you are nervous or concerned and may react to your emotions by getting scared or upset.
- Hold and talk to your child during the immunization.
- Distract your child during the immunization with:
 - A favourite toy, book or music
 - Telling a story or using humour
 - Asking your child to count
 - Asking your child to breathe slowly and deeply
 - Asking your child to squeeze your hand during the needle
- Encourage your child. If they require more than one needle, count with them and let them know when they are nearly finished.
- It is ok if your child cries during and/or after the immunization. Hug and comfort them.
- After the immunization, praise your child for being brave. Even if your child had a hard time, give them lots of praise. It's not easy to hold still!

Many young people and adults also feel nervous about getting immunized. Fear of needles or pain can make many people stressed or anxious. Sitting up straight, taking slow deep breaths, looking away and relaxing the muscles in the arm that is getting the vaccine can help you to be calm before, during and after immunization.

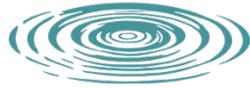
Listening to music, singing, reading or talking to someone else may also help to distract you. Talk to your nurse or health care provider about any ointments or other pain relief.



DID YOU KNOW?

Taking slow deep breaths and trying to distract yourself by thinking of something else may help to lower your anxiety about the needle.

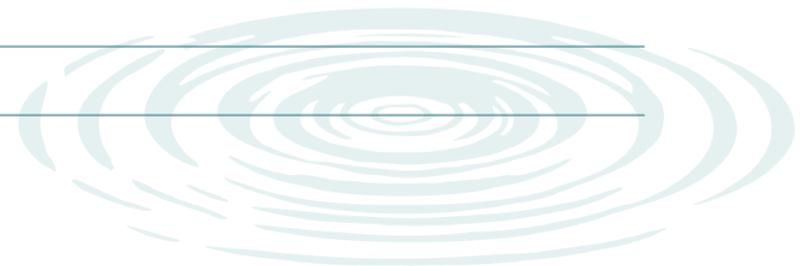
MARCH



Easter falls between March 22 and April 25

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8	International Women's Day
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17	St. Patrick's Day
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20	Spring Equinox –First Day of Spring
21	International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
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Healthier and stronger communities!

Immunizations not only help protect people from vaccine-preventable diseases, they also help stop the spread of these diseases in the community. Children, youth and adults who are immunized help protect the members of their community who aren't able to be vaccinated, who have not yet been vaccinated or for people whose immune system isn't strong enough to respond to the vaccines, including:

- Babies under 2 months old
- Young children who have not received all their vaccines
- Pregnant people
- People with health conditions that weaken their immune system



DID YOU KNOW?

Immunizations help protect your children from many infections and also help to stop the spread of diseases in your community. If you don't have the disease, you can't pass it on!



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APRIL



Easter falls between March 22 and April 25

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22	Earth Day
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Handwashing stops the spread of germs

When to wash hands:

- When your hands are dirty
- Before eating or touching food
- After using the bathroom
- After blowing your nose, coughing or sneezing
- After touching pets or other animals
- After being outside
- Before and after visiting a sick relative or friend

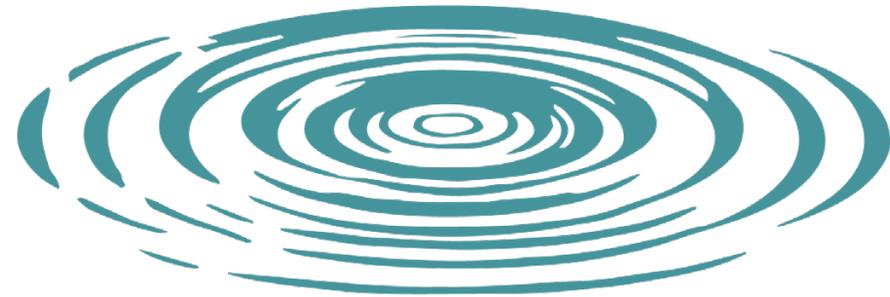
Steps to good handwashing

1. Wet your hands with water
2. Use soap
3. Lather and scrub your hands while you count to 20 slowly. Make sure you wash between your fingers, the backs of your hands, under your fingernails and jewellery
4. Rinse your hands well to remove all soap
5. Dry your hands with a clean towel
6. Teach good handwashing to your children. Have them sing a song that lasts 20 seconds while rubbing their hands together. This will show them the amount of time it takes to clean their hands properly
7. Make sure children see you wash your hands regularly



DID YOU KNOW?

Handwashing is one of the best ways to prevent the spread of infections!



MAY



Mother's Day is celebrated on the 2nd Sunday of May
Victoria Day is celebrated on the Monday preceding May 25

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5	National Day of Awareness for Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA+ Peoples (MMIWG2SLGBTQQIA+)
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Where do we go to be immunized?

Parents and caregivers are responsible for their children's health. It is important for parents and caregivers to know when and where to get their children immunized. Where you go to get immunized depends on where you live – on reserve, in a city or town, or in a rural or remote northern community.

Talk to a nurse, doctor, or local health care provider in your community. You can also contact your provincial or territorial public health department to find out where you can go for your vaccines.

DID YOU KNOW?

It is very important for parents, caregivers and other family members to be up-to-date with their immunizations to keep babies and elderly people safe from disease. Don't forget to ask your health care provider if your immunizations are up to date.



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JUNE



June is National Indigenous History Month
Father's Day is the 3rd Sunday in June

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21	National Indigenous People's Day First Day of Summer
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For more information:

Canadian Paediatric Society
<https://cps.ca/en/clinical/immunization-and-vaccines>

Health Canada
www.healthcanada.gc.ca/vaccinate

Indigenous Services Canada: Vaccinations for First Nations and Inuit
www.sac-isc.gc.ca/eng/1581522307599/1581522348005

Public Health Agency of Canada
www.publichealth.gc.ca/immunization

Immunize Canada
www.immunize.ca

CANvax
www.canvax.ca

The CARD system (Comfort, Ask, Relax, Distract)
<https://www.aboutkidshealth.ca/card>

Reduce the Pain of Vaccination in Kids and Teens: A guide for parents
https://caringforkids.cps.ca/uploads/handout_images/painreduction_kidsandteens_e.pdf

View and download the fact sheet series and other resources supporting vaccine confidence amongst First Nations, Inuit and Métis peoples and communities online at: nccih.ca and nccid.ca.



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National Collaborating Centre
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Centre de collaboration nationale
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