

COCOONING

HELP PROTECT YOUR BABY AGAINST INFECTION

WHAT IS COCOONING?

As a parent of a premature baby, you want to help protect your baby from getting sick, if you can. One way that may help is to try to create a “cocoon” around your baby.

Cocooning is a protective measure taken to encourage all adults and children in contact with your baby to be up-to-date with their immunizations.¹ When people around your baby have all been vaccinated, it may help to protect your premature infant by limiting his or her exposure to some vaccine-preventable diseases, creating a “cocoon” of wellness around the baby.¹

People who come in contact with your premature baby, including Mom, who should be immunized with vaccines, such as the pertussis and influenza vaccines, include:^{1,2}

- Parents
- Aunts and uncles
- Healthcare providers
- Siblings
- Daycare workers
- Grandparents
- Babysitters



WHY IS COCOONING IMPORTANT?

Although cocooning is a good idea for all babies, protecting your baby is important because the immune system of a premature baby is not as fully developed as that of a baby born full-term and premies need special care to help protect them from serious infections. Babies typically start their immunizations at about 2 months of age and your baby may have started his or her first set of shots in the neonatal intensive care unit (NICU). However, some of the primary series of shots are not completed, or even given, until about 6 months of age.²

Your newborn baby will not receive their flu shot until they are 6 months old, as recommended by The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). That is why it is so important for family members and all those in contact with your newborn baby to have had their flu vaccine — to help prevent the spread of the flu virus to your baby.

SHOULD PREMATURE BABIES FOLLOW THE SAME VACCINE SCHEDULE AS FULL-TERM INFANTS?

Yes, premature babies should follow the same vaccine schedule as full-term infants, with a few exceptions for certain vaccines. Despite studies that show that vaccines are safe and effective, it is reported that vaccine schedules are delayed for premature infants.¹

Talk to your baby's healthcare professional about his or her vaccine schedule and make sure that you follow your pediatrician's schedule for your baby's vaccines.

For more information, contact your healthcare professional (pediatrician or nurse), hospital, clinic, or local health department.

¹ Healy CM. Immunization strategies to protect preterm infants. NeoReviews. 2010;11:e409–e418.

² CDC. Immunization schedules. Available at: <http://cdc.gov/vaccines/recs/schedules/default.htm>. Accessed on 3 Jan 2012.



Helping Parents



Navigate The Premature Journey



WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO IMMUNIZE PREMATURE BABIES?

Premature babies are at a greater risk than full-term infants for developing “vaccine-preventable diseases,” such as pertussis (whooping cough), influenza (the flu), and hepatitis in early infancy.¹ Vaccine-preventable diseases can be very serious—even deadly—for infants.³

WHY ARE PREMATURE BABIES MORE SUSCEPTIBLE TO INFECTION?

- Mothers transfer antibodies that help provide immunity to their unborn babies. Most antibody transfer occurs after 28 weeks of pregnancy.⁴ Since your baby was born early, he or she may not have received the full antibody transfer that a full-term baby may have received.
- Premature infants may have other medical problems (such as heart or kidney problems) that increase their risk of catching vaccine-preventable diseases and of developing complications from these diseases.¹
- The intensive care of preterm babies may disrupt the baby’s protective barriers that form part of the body’s natural defense mechanisms.¹
- Some medicines that are often used to treat premature babies, such as steroids, may reduce your baby’s ability to fight against infection.¹



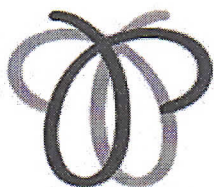
Help protect your baby against disease. Immunize your baby and make sure that others around your baby are immunized.

³ CDC. CDC Features—Immunize to protect your child against disease. Available at: <http://www.cdc.gov/features/infantimmunization/>. Accessed on 3 Jan 2012.
⁴ Yeung CY, Hobbs JR. Serum- γ G-globulin levels in normal, premature, post-mature, and “small-for-dates” newborn babies. *Lancet*. 1968;1(7553):1167-1170.

This information is for educational purposes only and is not intended to substitute for professional medical advice. Always consult with a healthcare professional if you have any questions about the health of your child.

Brought to you by  MedImmune

©2012 MedImmune. All rights reserved. ADV12-10368



Texas Parent to Parent

TEXAS PARENT TO PARENT
3710 Cedar Street, Box 12
Austin, TX 78705-1449
866/896-6001