



## Rotavirus Vaccine

### What is Rotavirus Vaccine?

The Rotavirus vaccine is a safe and effective vaccine that protects against rotavirus disease (virus causing severe diarrhea and vomiting). The vaccine is approved by Health Canada and is given free as part of the Routine New Brunswick Immunization Schedule.

### What are the benefits of the vaccine?

The Rotavirus vaccine is the best way to protect against rotavirus disease. When your child is immunized, he or she also helps to protect others.

The vaccine will not prevent diarrhea or vomiting caused by other germs.

### How is the vaccine given?

The Rotavirus vaccine is given by liquid drops into the mouth.

### Who should receive the vaccine?

In New Brunswick, one dose of vaccine is given to babies at two, four and six months of age, for a total of three doses. The vaccine can be given at the same time as other vaccines.

### Who should NOT receive the vaccine?

The vaccine should not be given if your child:

- had a severe allergic reaction to a previous dose of the vaccine;
- is allergic to any ingredients of the vaccine or its container;
- has a condition or disease that weakens their immune system;
- a history of intussusception (a condition where the bowels twist and become blocked);
- have uncorrected congenital abdominal disorders;
- have Severe Combined Immunodeficiency disorder (SCID);
- has diarrhea or vomiting; wait until your child is better

Speak with your health-care provider if you have any questions about whether or not your child can receive the vaccine.

### What are the possible reactions after receiving the vaccine?

- Side effects are rare, usually mild, and may include fussiness, fever, and loss of appetite.
- **It is important to stay in the clinic for 15 minutes after getting any vaccine** because there is an extremely rare possibility, less than 1 in a million, of a life threatening allergic reaction called anaphylaxis. Should this reaction occur, your health care provider is prepared to treat it.
- Intussusception is a type of bowel blockage that occurs in about 34 per 100,000 infants per year. There is a low risk of intussusception particularly during the 7 days following the first dose of rotavirus vaccine (between 1 and 7 cases per 100,000 infants immunized). Signs may include a swollen tummy, frequent vomiting, and bloody stools. Babies might pull their legs up to their chest in pain. Your baby could seem weak and irritable and have several bouts of intense crying. If your baby is showing these signs, you should take your baby to the closest emergency department.

### What can be done for reactions to the vaccine?

- For discomfort and fever, you may give your child acetaminophen (Tylenol®) or
- Ibuprofen (Advil®) according to the manufacturer's directions.
- Aspirin (ASA) should NOT be given to children younger than 18 years due to its link to Reye's syndrome.

## What else do you need to know?

- After your child receives the vaccine, the virus may be found in a baby's stool for at least 10 days after immunization. To prevent the spread of rotavirus to others, it is very important that parents and caregivers wash their hands very well after changing the baby's diapers.
- Your immunization provider will give you a record of your child's immunization. Keep this record in a safe place and bring it with you the next time your child is immunized.
- If your child has any unusual reactions to the vaccine, or you have any questions or concerns, please contact your health-care provider.
- The publicly funded rotavirus vaccine is provided to children at your local public health office or healthcare provider.

## Further information

For further information contact your healthcare provider, local [Public Health office](#) or Tele-Care 811.

## Useful websites:

- NB Routine Immunization  
<http://www2.gnb.ca/content/dam/gnb/Departments/h-s/pdf/en/CDC/Immunization/RoutineImmunizationSchedule.pdf>
- Government of New-Brunswick, Communicable Disease Control  
<http://www2.gnb.ca/content/gnb/en/departments/ocmoh/cdc.html>
- Canadian Coalition for Immunization Awareness and Promotion  
<http://www.immunize.cpha.ca>
- Public Health Agency of Canada  
<http://www.phac-aspc.gc.ca>