

Resources:

March of Dimes

<http://www.modimes.org/baby/your-babys-vaccinations.aspx>

American Academy of Pediatrics - Healthy Children

<http://www.healthychildren.org>

Massachusetts Department of Public Health

<http://www.mass.gov/eohhs/gov/departments/dph>

Center for Disease Control and Prevention

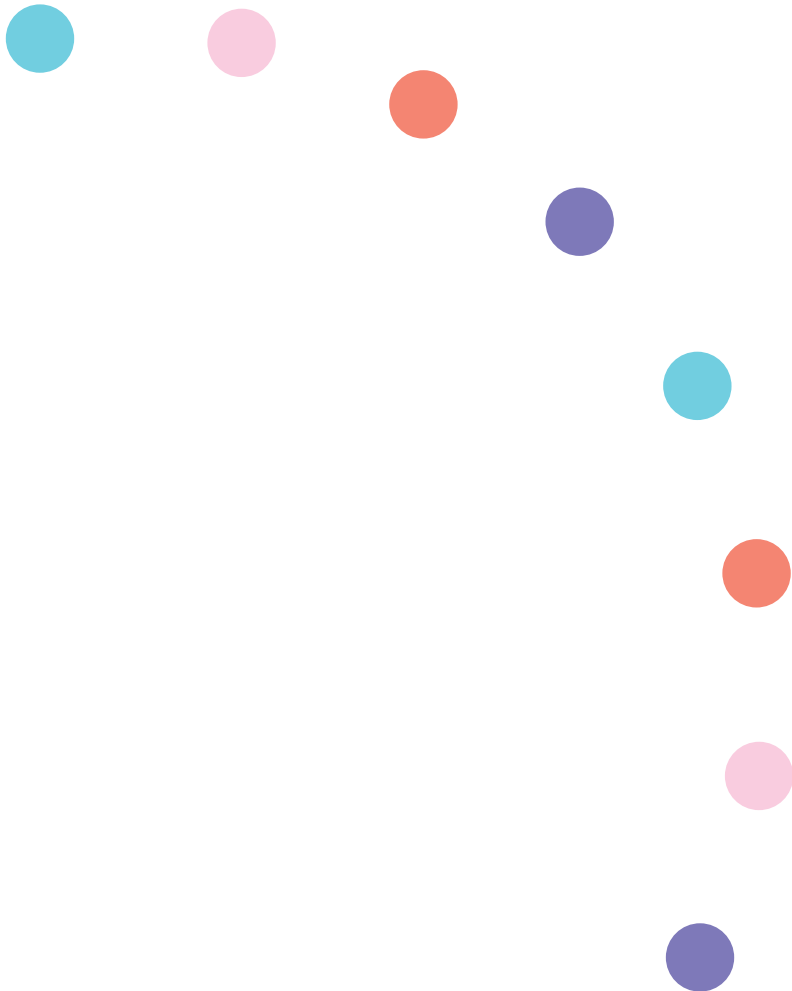
<http://www.cdc.gov/vaccines/parents/index.html>



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Cocooning:

*Protecting Your Baby
Against Infection*



What is 'Cocooning'?

Cocooning provides a layer of protection. When you cocoon your baby you are protecting your baby from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Some vaccines, including influenza and pertussis, cannot be given until your baby is older (six months old for influenza and two months old for pertussis). Until then, your baby will need help from others to avoid infections and stay healthy. Everyone who has direct contact with your baby should be up-to-date with immunizations, especially for influenza (the flu) and pertussis (whooping cough).

Why is Cocooning important?

Our immune system helps us fight infections, but a newborn has an immature immune system. As a baby grows and develops, the immune system grows stronger, but this takes some time. Until then, your baby will need help from others to stay healthy.

Who should be involved in Cocooning?

Mothers, fathers, brothers and sisters, aunts and uncles, grandparents, daycare providers and babysitters, and anyone else who will be helping you care for your baby.

What can be done to create a Cocoon of wellness around your baby?

Before or shortly after your baby is born and in the hospital:

- Get your influenza (flu) and pertussis (whooping cough) vaccines.
- If possible, provide your breast milk to your baby to take advantage of its infection fighting antibodies.
- Avoid all exposure to smoking and second hand smoke.
- When family or friends are ill, ask them to postpone their visit.

When you go home from the hospital:

- Keep hand sanitizer handy.
- Ask family, friends and visitors to wash or sanitize their hands before holding your baby.
- When family or friends are ill, ask them to postpone their visit.
- Avoid crowded places.
- Keep your baby's toys, pacifier and personal items clean.
- Keep your baby up-to-date with all vaccines.

When visiting the doctor:

Taking the special precautions described above is very important for the first few months after you go home. Your pediatrician will be able to give you guidance on when you can start letting your baby be around more people; this will depend on your baby's specific health issues.

