

Frequently Asked Questions:

Q1: What is Polio?

A1: Polio is an incurable disease caused by a viral infection, which usually spreads via contaminated food and water. This disease often affects the younger children, and paralyzes one or more limbs for life. As it is incurable, prevention is the only solution.

Q2: Why is polio vaccination being done repeatedly?

A2: Children upto 5 years of age need to be protected from this disease. Repeated vaccination increases the capacity of these children to resist this disease. The polio virus is unable to survive in the vaccinated children, and will finally be eradicated.

Q3: Should this vaccine be given to the newborn children also?

A3: Yes. Newborn children should be vaccinated, even if they are born a few hours ago. Younger the child, higher is the risk of getting the polio disease.

Q4: Can polio vaccine be given to children suffering from cough, cold, fever, diarrhoea or any other ailments?

A4: Yes, this vaccine can safely be given in these conditions. The polio vaccine has no harmful effects in these sick children, nor does it have any interaction with any medication that the child may have been prescribed for these ailments. The same may be confirmed from the treating physician by the parents.

Q5: Should this vaccine be given again in the campaigns to those children who have been given the polio vaccine 1 or 2 days back during routine immunization?

A5: Yes. Repeated vaccination at short intervals enhances the child's ability to resist the polio disease.

Q6: My child has taken all the pulse polio doses, should he get routine immunization also?

A6: Yes. Pulse polio vaccination helps to protect your child against polio only. Routine immunization vaccines protect against other diseases also, such as tuberculosis, diphtheria, pertussis, tetanus, measles etc.

Q7: Some children suffer from polio even after getting vaccinated. What is the use of getting my child vaccinated if the disease can occur even in vaccinated children?

A7: The risk of getting the polio disease after vaccination is negligible. This vaccine has prevented millions of paralyzes from Polio throughout the world. Children will develop immunity against the disease only after vaccination. Some children are unable to develop sufficient immunity against the disease due to various reasons like repeated episodes of diarrhea, malnutrition etc. Such children may get the disease after

vaccination, and these children can only be protected by vaccinating all the <5 children every time during the campaigns.

Q8: There are many other fatal diseases like malaria, measles etc affecting the children, why is there so much emphasis on Polio only? Why are the teams moving house to house for polio vaccination?

A8: Polio is one of the few diseases that can be eradicated. Polio can be eradicated by vaccination as was done for small pox. As the polio vaccine is given orally, it can be given house to house. Prevention and treatment of other diseases is also available at the nearest health centre.

Q9: Basic facilities like roads, electricity, safe water, ration card, birth certificate are not made available to us. Why should we take this vaccine in this condition?

A9: Different departments of the government work for the various programs. We are working for protecting the children from this killer disease. Polio vaccine is for protecting the children from polio. Please do not punish your children for the mistakes of the other government departments.

Q10: Is it true that this vaccine can cause infertility?

A10: This rumor is baseless and wrong. Polio vaccine is being used for the last 50 years. Many countries like Pakistan, Afghanistan, and Bangladesh etc are using this vaccine.

The Govt of Saudi Arabia has made it mandatory for Haj travelers from endemic countries to take the polio vaccine irrespective of age and previous vaccination status.

Q11: How long will the polio vaccination campaigns continue?

A11: The pulse polio campaigns will continue till the disease is eradicated from the world.

Q12: Can I give my child something to eat or drink immediately after he takes the vaccine?

A12: Yes, your child can safely be given something to eat or drink even immediately after vaccination.

Q12: Now that there is no Polio case in India, is it still important for us to take the vaccine?

A12: Polio transmission is going on in countries like Nigeria, Pakistan and Afghanistan, and there is a risk of virus importation from these countries to India. In the past, poliovirus was transmitted from India to many countries and there are chances of getting it back through same routes. It is important to vaccinate our children and keep their protection level high till polio is eradicated globally.