



PAN-AFRICAN
MANAGED CARE

Health Awareness Month

April 2023

**African
Vaccination
Week
24-30 April 2023**



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African Vaccination Week: 24-30 April 2023

A vaccine is a substance used to stimulate the body's immune response against diseases. Vaccines are administered through needle injections, by mouth, and are also sprayed into the nose. Vaccines have reduced and eliminated diseases that have killed past generations by teaching immune systems how to create antibodies that protect you from diseases. If enough people are vaccinated, it becomes difficult for the disease to spread in the community. In the past, about 30% of smallpox cases resulted in deformities and death. It has been reported that smallpox was the first disease to be eradicated by vaccination. The last smallpox case that occurred in the world was in 1977.

Benefits of vaccines

Vaccination and Immunization is a global health and development success story, saving millions of lives every year. Vaccines reduce risks of getting a disease by working with your body's natural defences to build protection. When you get a vaccine, your immune system responds.

We now have vaccines to prevent more than 20 life-threatening diseases, helping people of all ages live longer, healthier lives. Immunisation currently prevents 3.5-5 million deaths every year from diseases like diphtheria, tetanus, pertussis, influenza and measles.



Immunise-able diseases.

- COVID-19 disease:

An infectious disease caused by the SARS-CoV-2 virus. People infected experience mild to moderate respiratory illnesses and some may experience severe illnesses and will require medical attention.

- Tuberculosis:

Is a disease caused by germs that are contagious through the air and affects the lungs, brain, kidneys or the spine. Lack of treatment may lead to death.

- Diphtheria:

Is a severe infection with bacterium *Corynebacterium diphtheriae* which is transmitted by respiratory droplets from an infected to an uninfected person. This virus may result to difficulty in breathing, heart rhythm problems, and death.



- Pertussis:

Known as whooping cough, is a contagious respiratory illness caused by *Bordetella pertussis*.

- Measles:

Measles is a contagious viral infection that usually affects children. There may be white spots in the mouth and on the inner cheeks. UNICEF reported that the number of measles cases had risen to 169 across four South African provinces during the previous holiday season.

- Poliomyelitis:

Is a disabling and life-threatening disease caused by the poliovirus. The virus is contagious and can infect a person's spinal cord resulting in paralysis.

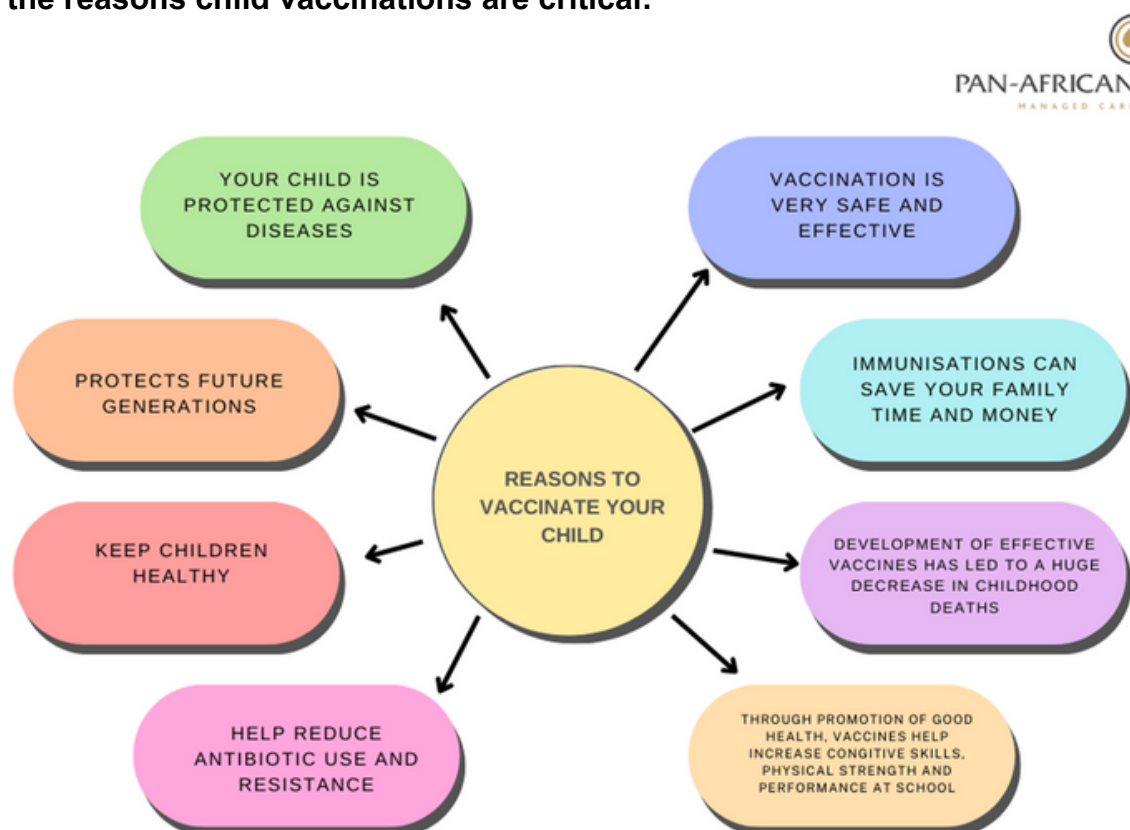
- Tetanus:

Is caused by the bacterium *Clostridium tetani* which are transmitted to a healthy individual from contaminated objects or the soil, through an opening on the skin.

- Hepatitis B:

Is an infection of the liver by the hepatitis B virus. It is most commonly contracted through sex and sharing needles.

Below are the reasons child vaccinations are critical:



<https://www.hhs.gov/immunization/get-vaccinated/for-parents/five-reasons/index.html#:~:text=immunization%20protects%20future%20generations,vaccination%20eradicated%20that%20disease%20worldwide.>



Conclusion

Immunisation interrupts the disease transmission process and reduces the chances of infecting others. Childhood immunisation schedules are considered to be the most effective and safe interventions that allow prevention from severe illnesses and possibility death. To learn more about vaccines visit your general practitioner or contact the National Health Hotline.

References:

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