Haemophilus Influenzae Type b (Hib) Vaccine
What you Need to Know

WHAT IS HIB DISEASE?

- *Haemophilus influenzae* type b (Hib) disease is a serious disease caused by a bacteria. It usually strikes children under 5 years old.
- Your child can get Hib disease by being around other children or adults who may have the bacteria and not know it. The germs spread from person to person. If the germs stay in the child's nose and throat, the child probably will not get sick. But sometimes the germs spread into the lungs or the bloodstream, and then Hib can cause serious problems.
- Before Hib vaccine, Hib disease was the leading cause of bacterial meningitis among children under 5 years old in the United States. Meningitis is an infection of the brain and spinal cord covering, which can lead to lasting brain damage and deafness. Hib disease can also cause:
  - Pneumonia.
  - Severe swelling in the throat, making it hard to breathe.
  - Infections of the blood, joints, bones, and covering of the heart.
  - Death.
- Hib vaccine can prevent Hib disease. Many more children would get Hib disease if we stopped vaccinating.

WHO SHOULD GET HIB VACCINE AND WHEN?

Children should get Hib vaccine at:

- 2 months of age
- 4 months of age
- 6 months of age*
- 12 to15 months of age

*Depending on what brand of Hib vaccine is used, your child might not need the dose at 6 months of age. Your doctor or nurse will tell you if this dose is needed.

- If you miss a dose or get behind schedule, get the next dose as soon as you can. There is no need to start over. Hib vaccine may be given at the same time as other vaccines.

Older Children and Adults

Children over 5 years old usually do not need Hib vaccine. But some older children or adults with special health conditions should get it. These conditions include sickle cell disease, HIV/AIDS, removal of the spleen, bone marrow transplant, or cancer treatment with drugs. Ask your doctor or nurse for details.

SOME PEOPLE SHOULD NOT GET HIB VACCINE OR SHOULD WAIT

- People who have ever had a life-threatening allergic reaction to a previous dose of Hib vaccine should not get another dose.
- Children less than 6 weeks of age should not get Hib vaccine.
- People who are moderately or severely ill at the time the shot is scheduled should usually wait until they recover before getting Hib vaccine.
- Ask your doctor or nurse for more information.

WHAT ARE THE RISKS FROM HIB VACCINE?

- A vaccine, like any medicine, is capable of causing serious problems, such as severe allergic reactions. The risk of Hib vaccine causing serious harm or death is extremely small.
- Most people who get Hib vaccine do not have any problems with it.

Mild Problems

- Redness, warmth, or swelling where the shot was given (up to 1/4 of children)
- Fever over 101ºF (up to 1 out of 20 children).

If these problems happen, the usually start within a day of vaccination. They may last 2 to 3 days.

WHAT IF THERE IS A MODERATE OR SEVERE REACTION?

What should I look for?

Any unusual condition, such as a serious allergic reaction, high fever or behavior changes. Signs of a serious allergic reaction can include difficulty breathing, hoarseness or wheezing, hives, paleness, weakness, a fast heart beat, or dizziness within a few minutes to a few hours after the shot.

What should I do?

- **Call** a doctor, or get the person to a doctor right away.
- **Tell** your doctor what happened, the date and time it happened, and when the vaccination was given.
- **Ask** your doctor, nurse or health department to file a Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System (VAERS) form. You can file this report through the VAERS web site at www.vaers.hhs.gov, or by calling 1-800-822-7967.

VAERS does not provide medical advice.

THE NATIONAL VACCINE INJURY COMPENSATION PROGRAM

- In the rare event that you or your child has a serious reaction to a vaccine, a federal program has been created to help you pay for the care of those who have been harmed.
- For details about the National Vaccine Injury Compensation Program, call **1-800-338-2382** or visit the program's website at **www.hrsa.gov/vaccinecompensation**

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE?

- Ask your doctor or nurse. They can give you the vaccine package insert or suggest other sources of information.
- Call your local or state health department's immunization program.
- Contact the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC):
  - Call **1-800-232-4636 (1-800-CDC-INFO)**
  - Visit the National Immunization Program's website at **www.cdc.gov/vaccines**

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