

Fact Sheet

News from the IBD Help Center

IBD AND KEEPING UP WITH IMMUNIZATION

Immunization is an important tool in preventing disease in healthy people. It is even more important in patients whose immune systems may be compromised, like those taking immunosuppressants with inflammatory bowel diseases (IBD). For IBD patients, there are some important things to consider before getting vaccinated.

IBD patients should, in most cases, follow the recommended immunization schedule for the general population of children and adults. IBD patients that will need or are currently taking immunosuppressants may need additional vaccines. However, it is important for you to know that some vaccines are live vaccines (active virus vaccines) and may need to be avoided when using IBD medications that suppress the immune system, such as steroids, immunomodulators (ex. azathioprine, 6MP or methotrexate), or biologic therapies (such as adalimumab, certolizumab pegol, infliximab or vedolizumab) 1,2,3,4. Your doctor may recommend inactivated forms of these vaccines if available. Before taking any vaccine, it is important that you first discuss the risks and benefits of the vaccine with your doctor.

Some common live vaccines include:

- Influenza (intranasal or inhaled version)
- MMR (measles, mumps and rubella)
- Varicella (chickenpox)
- Herpes zoster (shingles)
- Oral typhoid
- Yellow fever

Visit the Centers for Disease and Control and Prevention's (CDC) [US Vaccine Table](#) for a complete list of vaccines, as well as general [immunization schedules](#) for children and adults.

References:

- 1.Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. General recommendations on immunization – recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices (ACIP). *MMWR Recomm Rep.* 2011;60(2)-64.
- 2.Seper D, Melmed G. Vaccination Issues in Patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease Receiving Immunosuppression. *Gastroenterol Hepatol* (NY). 2012 Aug; 8(8):504-512.
- 3.Melmed Gil. Vaccination Strategies for Patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease on Immunomodulators and Biologics. *Inflamm Bowel Dis* Vol 15, num 9, Sept 2009.
- 4.Sands BE; Cuffari C, Katz J, Kugathasan S, Onken J, Vittek C, Orenstein W. Guidelines for Immunizations in Patients with Inflammatory Bowel Disease. *Inflamm Bowel Dis.* Vol 10, num 5, Sept 2004.

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