

H1N1Vaccine: Why Kids Need Two Doses

If your child is under 10 years old, they need a second dose of the H1N1 vaccine.

Here's why:

- The human body works to fight pathogens (disease causing organisms) by way of our immune system.
- Pathogens enter the body either by inhalation or direct contact with the mucous lining of the nose, mouth, or eyes.
- When viruses (like H1N1) enter the body, the immune system recognizes the pathogen as an invader and the white blood cells (WBC) work to attack and kill the virus. We become ill with fever, headache, cough, body aches, etc., because our body is attempting to fight off the pathogen.
- The WBCs produce antibodies that help kill the virus and memory cells to recognize future attacks of that same virus. Some viruses can become too powerful and the natural process cannot maintain protection.
- Vaccines help the body fight off illness by triggering an immune response against potentially fatal diseases.
- Vaccines contain parts of the dead virus or much weakened portions of live viruses, but not enough to cause illness.
- Getting vaccinated allows the body to make antibodies to fight the illness. When exposed to this virus in the future, our memory cells will recognize the virus and produce a quick immune response preventing an infection and giving our body's immunity to the virus.
- In children under 10, the second dose of the H1N1 vaccine is given to assure that the child's immune system is doing its job, boosting the immune system (memory cells) to recognize the virus, and thus producing immunity.