Your Child’s Health Depends on You
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Healthy Living

Keeping Infections Away

Wash yours hands and your child’s hands before handling food and after going to the toilet

Use a toilet, pit latrine or bury faeces/stool

Do not use lakes, streams or ponds as toilets
Do not bathe or swim in dirty water

Bury spit and tell anyone who is coughing to cover their mouth

Sleep under an insecticide-treated mosquito net (ITN)
Eating and Drinking

Add **Clorin** to or boil for 10 minutes all drinking water and store in a clean well covered bucket.

Breastfeed from birth to 6 months.

After 6 months continue to breastfeed as new foods are given.

Wash all fruits and vegetables and/or cook them well before eating.

Eat different types of foods to be smart, strong, and healthy.
Visiting the Clinic

Go to the clinic for all of your child’s vaccinations

Take your child for vitamin A supplements at the nearest clinic every 6 months from the age of 9 months to 5 years

Every 6 months from the age of 1 year to 5 years take your child for worm medicine at the nearest clinic

Use family planning for a happy, healthy family

Take your children to the clinic immediately if they show any danger signs as seen below (also listed on page 12)
Taking your well child to the clinic

Your child’s first clinic visit should be anytime from birth to 13 days. At this visit your child will be weighed, get two vaccinations and receive an Under 5 Card.

The under 5 card
Keep this card and bring it with you every time that you bring your child to the clinic. Your child’s weight, vaccination record, birth record, and health messages will be marked in the book.
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### Free, safe and available at all clinics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>What is needed</th>
<th>Protects against</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth</td>
<td>Bacillus Calmette-Guérin (BCG)</td>
<td>Tuberculosis (TB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Birth</td>
<td>Oral Polio Vaccination (OPV)</td>
<td>Polio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 weeks</td>
<td>OPV (2)</td>
<td>Polio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pentavalent (1)</td>
<td>Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenza B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 weeks</td>
<td>OPV (3)</td>
<td>Polio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pentavalent (2)</td>
<td>Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenza B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14 weeks</td>
<td>OPV (4)</td>
<td>Polio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Pentavalent (3)</td>
<td>Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus, hepatitis B, Haemophilus influenza B</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 months</td>
<td>Measles</td>
<td>Measles</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td>Eye disease, and other illnesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OPV (4) only if birth dose was missed</td>
<td>Polio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12 months</td>
<td>Deworming</td>
<td>Worms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 months</td>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td>Eye disease, and other illnesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 months</td>
<td>Diphtheria Pertussis Tetanus (DPT)</td>
<td>Diphtheria, whooping cough, tetanus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Deworming</td>
<td>Worms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21 months</td>
<td>Vitamin A</td>
<td>Eye disease, and other illnesses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 to 5 years every 6 months</td>
<td>Deworming &amp; Vitamin A</td>
<td>Worms, eye disease, and other illnesses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Growth monitoring and promotion** is the weighing of your child once every month from birth to 2 years of age then once every 3 months from the age of 2 years to 5 years. The weight is marked on the *Under 5 Card* to see if your child is growing well. Certain illnesses like HIV, malnutrition and worms are sometimes difficult to see. So, if your child is not growing well, it helps alert you and the health worker that there is something that may need attention. Measuring your child’s height is also important. Not growing taller means your child is not getting enough of the foods to grow strong and smart. (See food chart on page 9.)

**Supplementing Vitamin A** Starting at 9 months take your child to the health center every 6 months for Vitamin A pills. Vitamin A helps children grow, be able to see well, and fight infections.

**Deworming** Take children ages 1 – 5 years every 6 months to the clinic for free deworming pills. This is very important because it is not always easy to see if the child has worms, yet the worms can cause weak blood, or cause poor growth.
**Vaccinations**, also known as immunizations or injections, are the best way to protect your child from many diseases. Children ages 0-5 are especially at risk for these illnesses. It is better to prevent these diseases than to wait and treat a child who has become ill because even with treatment these diseases can cause permanent damage, disabilities or death. If your child has not received the vaccinations at the recommended times, ask a health worker to advise you on when to bring your child for the needed vaccinations to get them protected against dangerous diseases.

**BCG** vaccine is given once at birth unless it does not take the first time. It helps to protect against tuberculosis (T.B.). Tuberculosis is a disease that can affect the lungs, brain, glands and other parts of the body. The most common signs are a persistent cough, night sweats, not eating, and fever. If TB is not treated, it can lead to difficult breathing, pain, weakness, and maybe death. TB is easily spread from one person to another.

**OPV** oral polio vaccine must be given by mouth 4 times to protects against polio. The 1st dose is given at birth, 2nd dose at 6 weeks, 3rd dose at 10 weeks, and 4th dose at 14 weeks. This disease can cause paralysis of the limbs and possibly death.

**Measles vaccine** is given after nine months of age. A child who is sick with measles might have a fever, rash, runny nose, red eyes, a cough, an ear infection, and pneumonia. If you do not seek treatment, the child may become seriously sick and die.
Pentavalent is a combined vaccine containing DPT, HepB and Hib. It is injected 3 times to build immunity to the diseases. The first time is at 6 weeks, then at 10 weeks, and again at 14 weeks. DPT alone is given a 4th time when the child is 18 months. Pentavalent protects the child against diphtheria, pertussis (whooping cough), tetanus, hepatitis B and haemophilus influenza B. All of these sicknesses can lead to death if untreated.

1. **Diphtheria** causes fever, sore throat and difficulty swallowing. The danger is that the child could be left with weak eye muscles, difficulty swallowing and breathing, unable to move limbs, and heart damage.

2. **Pertussis** is commonly known as whooping cough. A child suffering from this will have fits of coughing with a whoop at the end, red eyes, running nose, and may cough out very thick sputum or vomit.

3. **Tetanus** causes pain and stiffness of the jaw, difficulty opening the mouth, pain all over the body, and sudden stiffening of the body lasting several seconds. It usually results in death.

4. **Hepatitis B** is a disease of the liver. Common signs include fever, not eating, vomiting and diarrhoea, yellow eyes and skin, pain in muscles and joints, and itching skin.

5. **Haemophilus influenza B** can cause disease of the membranes around the brain, lungs, blood, joints, bones or heart muscle.

**Healthy Mind Healthy Body**

**Things to do at home**

Some things that you can do to help your child grow well and be smart include:

1. **Eating a well-balanced diet that is right for the age**

A balanced diet contains energy giving foods, body building foods, and protective foods to maintain good health.
• 0 – 6 months of age only breastfeed
  (If you are HIV positive discuss breastfeeding with a health worker to help prevent your child from getting HIV.)
• 6 – 12 months 3 meals a day along with regular breastfeeding (Foods should be mashed or softened to prevent choking)
• 12 – 24 months 5 meals a day continue breastfeeding
• 2 – 5 years 3 meals a day

Meals should include a mixture of these foods in the portions noted on the plate:
2. Prevent your child from getting worms

Worms live in the stomach and intestines of infected children. There the worms eat the food that your child needs to grow or suck your child’s blood causing weak blood. Children get infected by worm eggs and larva found in soil and dirty water if they are swallowed or go through the skin.

- Always use the latrine or bury faeces.
- Wash hands after using the toilet, before eating, before preparing food, and after changing napkins.
- Wash all fruits and vegetables before eating them.
- Have your child wear foot-ware if possible when playing and walking in the fields.
- Keep the child’s fingernails short.

3. Eating Foods Rich in Vitamin A

Lack of Vitamin A may cause poor growth, eye disease, night blindness, complete blindness, and poor protection against diseases.

- Eat dark green leafy vegetables (rape, pumpkin leaves, spinach, etc), kapenta, liver, milk, eggs, and yellow fruits and vegetables (ripe mangoes, papaw, pumpkin, carrots, yellow sweet potatoes, etc).
4. Getting Your Child Tested for HIV

If you or your partner are HIV positive, it is important to have your child tested for HIV.

- HIV can be passed to your baby during pregnancy, birth or breastfeeding. A health worker can teach you many ways to reduce the chance of giving HIV to your baby. However, it is still important to test your child.

- If your child is HIV positive, proper steps can be taken to keep him or her well. ART (anti retroviral therapy) is available for children to help them stay healthy. Talk to your health worker about whether your child should start ART.

5. Family Planning

- Having children at least three years apart gives your body time to recover from the birth. It also helps your child who is breastfeeding get enough milk. Birth spacing helps you provide all the things that a child needs to grow and be healthy.

- There are many ways to prevent pregnancy. Discuss with your partner and go together to talk with a health worker to learn more about your family planning choices.
When Your Child is Ill
All children at times get sick even when you take precautions, and do every thing to protect them. Here is some information on how to take care of them at home, and when to take them to the clinic.

**Diarrhoea** (running tummy) is the passing of watery stools 3 times or more in a day. Common causes of diarrhoea include dirty hands, dirty utensils, dirty feeding bottles, dirty water, dirty fruits, dirty vegetables, germs in food, worms, and HIV/AIDS. Proper preparation of food, drinking water, and cleanliness greatly cut down the chances of getting diarrhoea.

Caring for Diarrhoea at home:

- Encourage your child to drink a lot more fluid than usual
  - Boil water and cool it then add a packet of oral rehydration solution (ORS) to a litre of water for the child to drink (2 banana cups equal 1 litre)
  - Continue breastfeeding
  - For a child 6 months or older give light porridge, rice water and other light foods
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Take your child to the nearest clinic:

- If there is blood or mucous in the stool
- If eyes or soft spot on the head look sunken
- If child will not breastfeed or eat
- If child becomes weak
- If your child’s mouth is dry
- If your child does not get better in five days
- If your child is also vomiting again and again

Coughing and Colds are common in children, and most of the time will get better without medication. Sometimes coughs are dangerous. To help keep your child from getting coughs and colds get all vaccinations, wash your child’s and your hands, breastfeed only for the first 4 – 6 months, keep your child away from anyone who is coughing if possible, ask people who are coughing to cover their mouths and turn away, bury spit or put it into a tissue and throw into a trash bin or pit, and keep your child away from fire or cigarette smoke.

Caring for Coughs and Colds at home:

- Feed your sick child. Food gives your child’s body strength to fight sickness
- If your child does not feel like eating a lot, give him small amounts of food often
- Give your child plenty to drink
- Have your child breathe steam from hot water (Be careful not to burn your child! )
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- For a blocked or runny nose drop 1 - 2 drops of clean water mixed with a little salt to taste like tears into the nose from cotton wool or cloth

- A fever or hot body can be cooled by removing clothes and wiping your child’s body with a warm cloth until cool. Then wrap your child with a light blanket. Do not let your child get cold and shiver. Take your child to the clinic if the fever lasts longer than one day.

Take your child to the nearest clinic:

- If your child is having difficult or noisy breathing
- If your child is breathing fast
- If your child’s chest is indrawing (sunken chest)
- If your child has a fever (hot body)
- If your child is coughing up blood
- If the cough has lasted more than 3 weeks
- If your child is not eating

HIV (Human Immunodeficiency Virus) is a virus that makes it difficult for your body to fight illnesses. It is not a disease that is easy to see. If your child is not growing well, gets sick often or has trouble getting well, it is a good idea to take him or her to the clinic to get tested for HIV. ART (anti-retroviral therapy) is available for children. ART is not a cure for HIV, but it can help a HIV positive child stay healthy. If your child is HIV positive, ask the health worker for advice.
Malaria is an infection of the blood caused by a parasite transmitted through a mosquito bite. Some ways to prevent malaria include sleeping under insecticide treated mosquito nets, screening windows, covering all of your body with blankets or clothing between 22:00 and 04:00, and using mosquito repellents on arms, legs and any skin that is showing.

A child suffering from malaria may experience the following: feeling hot and then cold (chills), a high fever, vomiting, headache, loose stools, muscle pain, and sweating.

**First take a child with these signs immediately to a health worker.**

**After returning home from the health worker or clinic:**

- Take malarial medication as prescribed by the health worker *(It is very important to complete all the medicine even if your child feels well)*
- Keep your child cool by taking off extra clothing and sponging with lukewarm water
- Continue breastfeeding or feeding as tolerated
- Give your child cool drinks and encourage drinking

Return to clinic if any danger signs come on (See list of danger signs at the end of this booklet).
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Danger Signs

A child showing any one of the following signs should be immediately taken to the nearest clinic:

Unable to eat, drink or breastfeed
Vomiting everything he or she takes in
Convulsions (fits)
Body weakness
High fever (body hotness)
Fast breathing
Chest indrawing
Noisy breathing
Flaring of the nose
Unconsciousness (fainting)
Stiff neck
Seeing or talking about things that are not real
Pus from the ear
Very painful ear
Crying a lot
Sunken eyes or soft spot
Dry mouth