

3 at Birth

Medications recommended for your newborn

Why does my baby need these medications?

These medications are important for your baby's health. Both the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) and the Centers for Disease Prevention and Control (CDC) advise that all newborns receive these medications. Every baby born at Valley Medical Center will receive three medications **during their first hour after birth**.

What are the medications?

1	2	3
Vitamin K	Hepatitis B Vaccine	Erythromycin

How will these medications be given?

- Vitamin K and the Hepatitis B vaccine are both given by injection to the thigh. They are in a single-dose syringe and do **not** contain preservatives.
- Erythromycin ointment is applied to both eyes

Why are these medications important?

Vitamin K

Vitamin K is needed for blood clotting. It is produced by the "good" bacteria in our intestines. Newborns have very little vitamin K in their bodies because their intestines do not yet have the good bacteria that produce vitamin K. This means all newborns are at higher risk for **vitamin K deficiency bleeding** (VKDB). VKDB occurs when babies cannot stop bleeding because their blood does not have enough vitamin K to form a clot.

Additionally, breastmilk contains very low amounts of vitamin K. Therefore, when you feed your baby **only** breastmilk, they are not getting enough vitamin K to improve their clotting ability. If your baby does not receive the vitamin K injection and gets VKDB, it can be very serious. The associated bleeding could cause brain injury or death.

VKDB is easily prevented. A vitamin K injection given right after birth protects almost all babies from VKDB. Once they begin eating regular foods, their normal intestinal bacteria will start making all the vitamin K they need.

Hepatitis B Vaccine

Hepatitis B (Hep B) is an infection of the liver. This infection can be prevented by the HepB injection. Sadly, about 1,000 U.S. newborns are diagnosed with Hep B each year. Most of these infants will likely develop a chronic (long-term) Hep B infection, which has the potential to lead to severe outcomes, such as death, if they do not receive treatment.



The most common source of Hep B infection for babies is from their mothers. Some mothers may not know they have the infection, even though they are tested for Hep B during pregnancy. Babies can also get Hep B from exposure to blood and other bodily fluids from other frequent contacts and caregivers such as partners, siblings, grandparents and other relatives, daycare workers, nannies/babysitters, and healthcare workers.

The AAP and CDC advise that infants who weigh 4 pounds, 6 ounces (2000 g) or more receive their first hepatitis B vaccine within the first 24 hours of life. **This shot protects all infants from all possible Hep B infection sources, even if their mothers have Hep B.**

Erythromycin Eye Ointment

Neonatal conjunctivitis is a type of eye infection that is caused by bacteria. The most serious risk of this infection is blindness.

Babies can be infected when they pass through the birth canal if their mother has chlamydia, gonorrhea, and other bacteria. About half of newborns who have an eye infection also have the infection in other parts of their bodies.

Erythromycin eye ointment reduces the risk of eye infection, which reduces the risk of blindness from the infection.

Questions?

Your questions are important. Call your doctor or healthcare provider if you have questions or concerns.

Visit these websites to learn more

<p>Hepatitis B Vaccine CDC Recommendations qrgo.page.link/3Ph3D</p>	<p>Hepatitis B Vaccine AAP Recommendations qrgo.page.link/3mKoV</p>	<p>Conjunctivitis CDC Resource qrgo.page.link/Gg9kW</p>
		

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