



Understanding VAERS: The Vaccine Safety Reporting System



What is VAERS?

VAERS stands for **Vaccine Adverse Event Reporting System**. It's a national program run by the **Centers for Disease Control (CDC)** and the **Food and Drug Administration (FDA)** to monitor vaccine safety. Healthcare professionals are required to report to VAERS, and vaccine manufacturers are required to report all adverse events that come to their attention. **Even if the vaccine didn't cause the problem, it still gets recorded.** VAERS helps detect unusual or unexpected patterns of adverse events that might indicate a possible safety problem with a vaccine. This tells CDC and the FDA to further assess a possible safety concern.



What Does VAERS Show About Childhood Vaccines?

- **Most reports are mild** like fever, swelling, or a sore arm.
- **Serious problems are extremely rare**, but VAERS helps us look for them early.
- If something unexpected shows up, experts investigate **right away**.

Example: A past rotavirus vaccine was removed after VAERS helped detect a rare stomach problem - the system worked.



Key Safety Facts

- Every childhood vaccine approved by ACIP has been studied in **millions of children**.
- VAERS helps make sure vaccines stay **as safe as possible**, even after they are approved.
- There is **no evidence from VAERS** that vaccines cause autism, developmental delays, or chronic illness.



So What Should Parents Know?

- A VAERS report **does not mean** a vaccine caused harm.
- It means we're watching carefully, just in case.
- VAERS is part of a **bigger safety network** that protects your child.



Want to Learn More?

Talk to your pediatrician or visit <https://vaers.hhs.gov/about.html>



You deserve safe choices for your child. We're here to help. Together, we make smart, safe decisions for the health of our children.

